

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



## 通 信

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

January 2020 Vol. 29, No. 1

### Happy New Year!



明けましておめでとうございます！

**Thank you, JASM members, for all of your support. The Japan America Society of Minnesota wishes you and your families a happy new year.**

### Recap: Annual Meeting and Bonenkai



*Attendees at 2019 Annual Meeting and Bonenkai*

On December 17th many guests gathered at Sakura Restaurant in St. Paul for JASM's Annual Meeting and Bonenkai events.

The night began with the annual meeting. JASM President Elizabeth Fehrmann gave an overview of the past

year and future plans for JASM. Outgoing JASM treasurer Shannon Meyer presented the financial report, and the JASM board voted on new board members for the upcoming year. Results: Clint Connor will complete his term as a JASM board member, and Yoko Torigoe was elected incoming treasurer. We then honored the work of outgoing JASM board members Shannon Meyer and Hiroko Shade.

Afterward, we celebrated the end of the year with a traditional Bonenkai celebration. Bentos and drinks were supplied through Sakura Restaurant. Guests enjoyed the company of new and old friends as they said goodbye to 2019.



*Attendees enjoying each other's company at Bonenkai*

Thank you to everyone who joined us for this event. We are so thankful for your support and for the opportunity to enjoy this special time with all of you.

One final thank you to Sakura Restaurant for hosting this event and providing us with delicious food.

### Upcoming: Shinnenkai - January 26th



*Performers at Shinnenkai 2019*

Every year we here at JASM like to celebrate the coming year in the traditional Japanese way. At JASM's Shinnenkai event we welcome the new year with dance, vocal, and instrumental performances along with plenty of activities for the entire family to enjoy.

**Sunday, January 26th**  
3:00 - 7:00 pm

**Washington Technology Magnet School**

Please see page 4 for more details.

### New Donation Option: Employee Match



What is Employee Match? Employee Match occurs when a company matches the donations of their employees who donate to eligible non-profits like JASM. This could be monetary donations, or if the employee volunteered, the company might give money to the nonprofit for the time that the employee volunteered for. Some companies do not offer this program and even if they do, each company has different policies on what they will match and how. Please consult your company to see what their policies are.

If there is anything that JASM needs to do to qualify for Employee Match at your company (i.e. filling out any forms or signing up), please let us know by calling (612) 627-9357 or emailing us at [jasm@us-japan.org](mailto:jasm@us-japan.org) and we will be sure to take the necessary steps to make this possible.

Thank you for considering this donation option and for all of your contributions to JASM. It is thanks to you that we are able to further the relationship between Minnesota and Japan.

## Letter from the JASM President



*Elizabeth Fehrmann,  
JASM President*

Dear JASM community,

明けましておめでとうございます！ Welcome to 2020 and the first New Year of Reiwa!

Well, winter certainly hit hard and fast this year, didn't it? Seems like I barely had time to mulch the last leaf before the snow fell, and now I'm making good use of my roof rake. I won't complain too much, though, because I do love winter and all the cozy things it brings back into season:

fuzzy blankets, crackling fires, and hot stew.

This past year, JASM had a packed, eventful schedule. In fact, it was a record year in many ways. We not only successfully hosted the core programs fundamental to our community—such as J-Quiz, Harukaze, and Obon—but we also introduced several new events and initiatives, expanded our outreach efforts to new areas and organizations, and executed key infrastructure advancements to streamline our operations. We saw high levels of engagement and excitement at all levels of the organization. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to the JASM team and everyone who helped make 2019 such a success!

However, even though last year was a great one, we didn't get to do everything we wanted to do. We had more plans than we had time for, so I encourage you to look forward to more new and exciting events this year. I hope you're all as excited as I am at the prospect of more cooking classes!

Last month, we bid farewell to our Treasurer of six years: Shannon Meyer. He and his family relocated to Nebraska, and we wish him all the best in his next adventure. Fortunately for us, the very capable Yoko Torigoe will be stepping up as our new JASM Treasurer. Torigoe-san is a dual-licensed professional (CPA and Attorney at Law) who consults for the accounting and auditing industry leader, Deloitte, and Yoko moved here from Oregon this past spring. Please join me in welcoming Torigoe-san to Minnesota and to our leadership team!

Before I close, I need to once again express my sincere gratitude to board member Bob Luck for stepping in and taking the President's role for August-November while I focused on pressing work and personal matters. He thoroughly dedicated himself to the role in my absence and forged ahead with tenacity and vigor. I can't thank him enough!

Finally, Shinnenkai is coming up very soon, so plan to hang up your shovel for an afternoon and come join the festivities! Visit our (new!) website to sign up; I will see you all there.

Best wishes for 2020,

- Elizabeth Fehrmann, JASM President

## Save the Date: J-Quiz 2020



*Students participating in J-Quiz 2019*

J-Quiz 2020 is right around the corner. On Saturday, February 15th high school students from across Minnesota and Wisconsin will be gathering at Normandale Community College to test their knowledge of Japanese language and culture.

First, students will write an essay followed closely by the preliminary questions. Next come the final rounds. The winners of these rounds will have the opportunity to go to Washington D.C. to compete at Japan Bowl and attend the Sakura Festival.

Friends, family, or anyone who is interested may come and watch the final rounds and enjoy the cultural segment of the program where there will be a tea ceremony and a taiko demonstration.

**Saturday, February 15th**  
7:30 am - 3:40 pm

***Normandale Community College***  
9700 France Ave. S.  
Bloomington, MN 55431

More information will be provided in the next Tsushin. Until then, please visit our website at [mn-japan.org](http://mn-japan.org) for updates.

## Membership News

### Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Chris Armacost, Clinton Connor, Eugene Gullingsrud, Mirja and Sam Hanson, Jeffrey and Mutsuko Hensley, Phaeton Holland, Alexandra Howes, Inchan Hwang, Pamela Joy, Andrew Morris, Richard Ryan, Ryan Test, Rio Saito, Kate Thersleff

### Thanks to the following renewing corporate members:

Surdyk's Liquor & Cheese Shop

### Thanks to the following new corporate members:

Minnesota Foreign Trade Zone 119

## Outreach: Nagomi Ya Senior Living



On Friday, December 20th, JASM Executive Director Rio Saito went to Nagomi Ya Senior Living in Apple Valley for a Christmas celebration with the residents. She was joined by Ryo Nakayama-sensei of Harding High School who is also a J-Leap teacher and a representative for Gen-J.

Together they helped hand out presents to the residents and enjoyed a meal with them comprised of various Japanese and Korean foods. Residents' family visited as well, and everyone sang many traditional Christmas songs together. Nakayama-sensei and Rio led the residents and their guests through a few Christmas songs in Japanese as well.

We are so thankful to Nagomi Ya for allowing us to join them during this festive season. We had a wonderful time and we hope to be able to spend more time at Nagomi Ya in the future.

If you would like to go and keep some of the residents of Nagomi Ya company, please call us at (612) 627-9357 or email us at [jasm@us-japan.org](mailto:jasm@us-japan.org) and we would be more than happy to give you more information. Visitors should have a working understanding of the Japanese language if they plan on interacting with the residents.

## Corporate Spotlight: Winona State University Global Studies Department



The Winona State University Global Studies Department encourages their students to acquire skills in Japanese, Spanish, German, French, and Chinese, and international matters as a whole. Coursework in global studies is very flexible and diverse to allow students to tailor their major to their interests and to ensure a well-rounded understanding of other cultures. This includes studying everything from economics and history to literature and the environment and does not have to include language study. They also promote and sponsor events for students to discuss and think critically about global issues.

This philosophy is enumerated directly on the department's webpage:

"The mission of the global studies program at Winona State University is to enable its majors to adopt a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the growing interconnectedness and interdependence between the people and countries of the world. The program challenges its students to critically examine the causes and consequences of the changes that are occurring at various levels, to shape these changes in a positive direction and to assume personal and professional responsibilities of global citizenship." – Winona State University website

Within the Japanese Studies department at Winona they encourage their students to find growth not only through study abroad, but through participation in language competitions as well. In 2019, they sent one of their own, Eric Leith, to the Japanese Language Speech Competition in Chicago where he won the Japan America Society of Chicago (JASC) Award.

We here at JASM are so grateful to the Winona State University Global Studies Department for their dedication to equipping students to become well-rounded global citizens and for their continuous support of JASM.

For more information about the Winona State University Global Studies Department, please go to <https://www.winona.edu/gswl/>.

*Please thank our members with  
your support!*

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Winona State University Global Studies Dept.





# Shinnenkai 2020



## Shinnenkai 2020

Japanese New Year Celebration  
Sunday, January 26th, 2020 3:00-7:00 PM

2020: Year of the Rat!



Washington  
Technology Magnet  
School Great Hall  
1495 Rice St.  
St. Paul, MN 55117



The Japan America Society of Minnesota is bringing  
you Shinnenkai - the traditional Japanese way of  
welcoming the New Year!

### Live Entertainment all Evening!

There will be *Koto* music performed by Sakurakai, a trumpet  
performance by Takako Senn, a dance performance by Thunder  
Wave, classical ballet by Yuki Tokuda & friends, a Taiko  
performance by Taiko Arts Midwest, a Janken tournament,  
delicious food, and much more!

#### Advanced Ticket Price (until Jan. 25, 2019)

\$13: Non-JASM Members

\$10: JASM Members

\$5: 18 yrs & under, College Students (with ID)

Free: Children (5 yrs & under)

Family Package (Up to 2  
adults and 2 children in the  
same household)

\$25: Non-JASM Member

\$20: JASM Member

#### At the door:

\* Tickets will be \$2 extra



Please visit our website [www.mn-japan.org](http://www.mn-japan.org) to purchase tickets .

Contact Us:

Japan America Society of Minnesota Riverplace  
EH-131, 43 Main St. SE, Minneapolis MN 55414

Tel: 612.627.9357

[jasm@us-japan.org](mailto:jasm@us-japan.org)





## MN Grassroots Development: JACL

Back in September of 2018, JASM began a series called *MN Grassroots Development* to highlight organizations striving toward good US-Japan relations, and give them a platform to showcase what they have been doing and what they are planning for the future. This month's featured organization is the Twin Cities Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL).



*Twin Cities JACL youth members, Kendal Takeshita (first row, second from left) and Vinicius Taguchi (second row, far right) with other delegates from the Midwest at the 2019 JACL National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah*

The Twin Cities Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) has had an exciting year. JACL is the oldest and largest civil rights organization representing Asians in the US. This year, our chapter participated in JASM's Shinnenkai, Obon, Festival of Nations, and the Japan-Minnesota Grassroots Forum to engage with the Japanese and Japanese American communities in Minnesota. We also sent delegates to the local Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL) summit to collaborate with grassroots groups representing other Asian communities in the Twin Cities. This summer, one of our youth members participated in the JACL Chicago Kansha Project, which included a reflective pilgrimage to Little Tokyo in Los Angeles and the Manzanar concentration camp where many Japanese Americans were imprisoned unconstitutionally during World War II. And at our annual Chrysanthemum Banquet in November, our keynote speaker was Marsha Aizumi, author of *Two Spirits One Heart*, which explores the intersection of transgender and Japanese American identities.

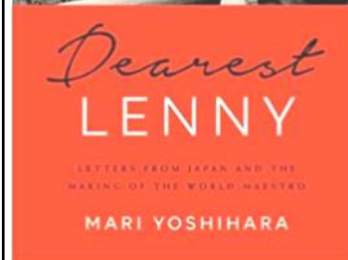
We are looking forward to exciting opportunities to support our community as we prepare for the election in 2020 and continue providing scholarships to local students. Consider traveling to the Stearns History Museum in St. Cloud to see the Smithsonian exhibit entitled "Righting a Wrong: Japanese Americans and World War II," on display until January 5th, 2020. We are currently organizing efforts to fold and donate origami cranes in support of Tsuru for Solidarity's project to hold demonstrations in Washington, D.C. in June 2020 protesting the current imprisonment of migrants in concentration camps on our southern border. They will present 125,000 origami cranes symbolic of the 125,000 Japanese Americans imprisoned during World War II.

Lastly, youth of Japanese heritage aged 18-22 who are not Japanese citizens are invited to apply for JACL's Kakehashi Project, which is a free 9-day experiential trip to Japan. For more information on any of the above, or to partner with us on your own projects, please contact [info@tcjacl.org](mailto:info@tcjacl.org) or [youth@tcjacl.org](mailto:youth@tcjacl.org).

- Vinicius Taguchi, JACL

## Tom Haeg's Book Review

*Dearest Lenny: Letters from Japan and the Making of the World Maestro*; Mari Yoshihara, Oxford University Press, 2019.



Leonard Bernstein was perhaps the most prolific musical composer and conductor in the twentieth-century. Following his death in 1990, his estate donated to the Library of Congress 1,700 boxes consisting of over 400,000 manuscripts, letters, business records, etc. Quite the cache. It is open to scholarly inspection.

Ms. Yoshihara, a professor of American studies at Hawaii University, was one such inspector. She found it curious to discover among

this massive trove over-looked correspondences between Bernstein and two Japanese admirers: Kazuko Amano (nee Ueno) and Kunihiko Hashimoto.

Ms. Amano's letters to Bernstein began in the 1940's and ended in 1990. They are all in longhand and begin with "Mr. Bernstein", "Dear Leonard", "Dear Sir", or "Beloved Lenny." At first her letters were of the puppy-love genre ("...girlish fandom for a rising star..."), but they gradually developed into more serious discussions on music and family. While they formed a strong relationship, it was strictly platonic. According to Yoshihara, her letters represented the growing Japanese interest in Bernstein's work in Japan after the war.

Not Mr. Hashimoto. It is well settled that Leonard Bernstein was gay ("...a gay man who got married."). And so was Hashimoto. Yoshihara describes their letters as "passionate, tender and sometimes heartbreaking." What began as a random encounter between an insurance agent and erstwhile amateur actor (Hashimoto) and the world's greatest conductor (Bernstein) turned into a 10-year secret (love and business) relationship. Hashimoto organized Bernstein's Hiroshima peace concerts in 1985, adapted his works as a writer, director and producer and translated Bernstein's *Candide*. When Yoshihara confronted Hashimoto about the existence of the letters in the Library of Congress, his initial reaction was "shock", followed by a subdued resignation knowing that she intended only to use them as part of a scholarly work. Which she did.

While there are more lengthy biographies of Bernstein, *Dearest Lenny* reveals aspects of his life that heretofore were overlooked by other scholars to help explain the depths of his genius. More importantly, I think the JASM reader will especially appreciate Bernstein's affinity to Japanese culture which inspired him to continue to make great music in his later years.

- Tom Haeg





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### Advertisement Rates

Style	Size	Cost/issue
1/4 page	3.5 x 5 in	\$50.00
1/2 page	7.5 x 5 in	\$90.00
Full page	7.5 x 10 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 or [jasm@us-japan.org](mailto:jasm@us-japan.org)**

## Calendar

### January

Shinnenkai - January 26th

### February

J-Quiz - February 15th

## Become a JASM Member online

*Support our mission and become a member!*

1. Go to [mn-japan.org](http://mn-japan.org)
  2. Click on 'Support JASM' at the top and select 'Join'
  3. Select your membership type and read the benefits and instructions.
- You can also become a member using your smartphone.

## Japanese Conversation Clubs



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 at least 3:30).

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



Another group for studying Japanese!

Check out Twin Cities Japanese Language Study Group <http://meetu.ps/c/3fPSK/FQBBY/d> on Meetup!

\*This is a private group. In order to join, several questions must be answered by following the link above.

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



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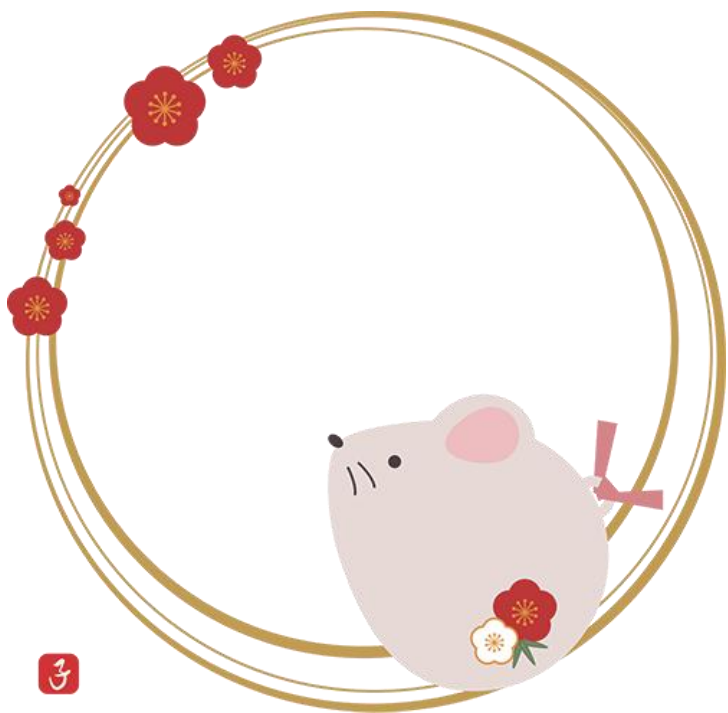
## 通信

Tsūshin  
January 2020

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)*



# 謹賀新年

新年おめでとうございます。

昨年は一方ならぬご厚情をいただき、

誠にありがとうございます。来年もどうぞ

よろしくお願いいたします。

皆様のご健康とご多幸をお祈り申し上げます。

ミネソタ日米協会

令和二年 元旦

The Japan America Society of Minnesota wishes you and  
your family a joyful, bright, healthy, prosperous, and  
happiest new year!!

JASM Team 