

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



## 通 信

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

February 2020 Vol. 29, No. 2

### Recap: 2020 Shinnenkai



*Koto Music Performance by Sakurakai*

During the lovely Sunday afternoon of January 26th, more than 300 attendees came to enjoy JASM's Shinnenkai at Washington Technology Magnet School in St. Paul.

The event was kicked off at 3:00 pm by the emcee, Doua Young, followed by performances of many local talents including koto music by Sakurakai, Takako Senn on the trumpet, dances by Thunder Wave and Yuki Tokuda and Friends, and a taiko performance by Taiko Arts Midwest.

Meanwhile, there were booths around the hall so guests could get to know the Japan-related organizations and schools in Minnesota: College of St. Benedict / St. John's University Japanese program, Concordia Language Villages, Eastview High School, Harding Japanese National Honor Society (JNHS), Japanese American Citizens League, Kendama Institute, Minnesota Japan America Sumi-e Club, MN Nihonjinkai, Saint Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee (with XPERITAS), Sogetsu Ikebana Study Group, Twin Cities Aikido Center, and Upper Midwest Koi Club. This year the attendees could receive a bottle of SAN-J soy sauce if they visited all the booths and did their activities! The generous donation was made by SAN-J International, Inc.



The attendees also could enjoy mochi rice pounding, janken tournaments, delicious food, and many other attractions. Thank you to everyone who attended. It was so fun to be able to welcome in the new year with all of you.



*Volunteers at the food booth*

This event could not happen without the following supporters. Mr. Ryo Nakayama, teacher of Harding High School and Ms. Tsubasa Sato, teacher of Eastview High School, who are supported by Japan Foundation, thank you for your sponsorship of the Shinnenkai 2020.

*Continues on page 2*

### Upcoming: J-Quiz



*Cultural portion of J-Quiz with dancing*

Make sure you save the date: JASM's annual J-Quiz is coming up fast! On Saturday, February 15th, high school students from across

Minnesota and Wisconsin will compete at Normandale Community College to test their knowledge of Japanese language and culture.

Competing students will write an essay in Japanese and be asked numerous preliminary questions. To conclude the competition, finalists will answer questions for the opportunity to go to Washington D.C. to compete in the nation-wide Japan Bowl and attend the Sakura Festival.

While part of the day will be dedicated exclusively to the competitors, we invite everyone to join us to watch the final rounds of J-Quiz and to enjoy the cultural segment of the program.

Friends, family, and interested members of JASM and the

public are more than welcome to join us for these events, including a tea ceremony by Yukimakai and a taiko performance by Harisen Daiko. It will be free to join.



*A few of the J-Quiz winners with JASM Executive Director Rio Saito and Yuta Sano, Consul of Japan in Chicago*

#### **Schedule for the visitors**

8:00 am: Opening Ceremony

9:40 am: Taiko Performance by Harisen Daiko

10:10 am: Tea Ceremony Demonstration by Yukimakai

10:40 am: Tea Ceremony Demonstration by Yukimakai

11:10 am: Taiko Performance by Harisen Daiko

12:30 pm: Final Rounds begin

#### **Saturday, February 15th**

7:30 am - 3:40pm

#### ***Normandale Community College***

9700 France Ave, S.

Bloomington, MN 55431

## Meet Our Board Member: Yoko Torigoe



*Yoko Torigoe,  
JASM Board Member*

On one of the historically cold days in February 2019, I had my initial contact with JASM. As a person who will be a transplant to Minnesota in the coming spring, I was desperately seeking advice and tips as to how to survive in the state in which I listened to a radio saying it is a colder place than the habitable locations in Canada. Without having any relatives or friends in the state, JASM was one of the places I could think of to get much needed help. As all of you

might know, Rio is cool, and her reply to my email was brief but concise and that made me decide to set my pre-moving visit to the state when JASM had an event. When I visited the state, I joined the Know-Me-Kai and that was where I first met Rio, Yoko, and many JASM members. The Know-Me-Kai was an excellent way for me to learn what JASM is, what JASM offers to members and the community, and what my Minnesota life will look like. I received lots of positive impressions at the event and made friends with whom I have been keeping in touch since.

Upon completion of an MBA, I began working in a tax practice of one of the Big 4 accounting firms in New York. I successfully managed my time out of the hectic work schedule at the firm and became a licensed CPA. At the firm, I provided tax compliance and consulting services to global corporations in the U.S., focusing on the U.S. income and employment taxes related to international assignees. After eight years of experience, I became interested in expanding my capacity on top of accounting and tax so I could assist my clients more comprehensively from a strategic and holistic perspective. Consequently, I decided to attend a law school and pursue the path to become an attorney.

At law school, I was an associate editor of a law review, a student liaison for the State Bar Taxation/New Tax Lawyer Committee, and received pro bono and community service honors. I interned at various places including the Washington State Office of the Attorney General.

I have lived in multiple states in the U.S. including Oklahoma, New York, Oregon, and now Minnesota. Every location I have resided in has a Japan America Society office and I enjoyed being a part of their family. Each office reflects the culture and needs of local people and operates with its discretion to provide the best services and benefit to its members. I am hoping my past experience seeing different styles of various Japan American Society operations will contribute to the growth of JASM.

- Yoko Torigoe, JASM board member

## Recap: 2020 Shinnenkai, continued

A special thank you to all of our volunteers. We would not have been able to put on this event without all of your hard work and it was such a joy to work alongside all of you. You all did such an amazing job and we are so grateful for all of you. A big thanks goes to these JASM supporters:



Mami Russel and Tomoko Drake. Minneapolis Japanese School provided mochi pounding equipment.

Also, thank you to donors: Ambassador Mondale, Breadsmith, Great Harvest, and Kendama Institute.



## Membership News

Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Joshua Jabas, Elliot Jobe, Michelle Jourdan, Ariel Kaiser,  
Karen Harwerth, Steven Kreitz, Barbara Shields

Thanks to the following renewing Corporate members:

Winona State University,  
Surdyk's Liquor and Cheese Shop,  
Naigai Industries U.S.A. Inc.



## Shinnenkai Photo Gallery



Look for more great photos on JASM's Facebook page.

*Please thank our members with your support!*

### **Corporate Benefactor Members**

Anime Twin Cities, Inc.  
Daikin Applied  
Delta Air Lines, Inc.  
MTS Systems Corporation  
Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.  
Taiyo International

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### **Corporate Sustaining Members**

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MGK, Inc.  
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Satellite Industries, Inc.  
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Tomodachi  
Zen Healing Center

### **Nonprofit Members**

Concordia Language Villages  
Economic Club of Minnesota  
Global Minnesota  
JETAA Minnesota  
JETRO Chicago  
JP Network, St. Cloud State University  
KCC-Japan Education Exchange  
Macalester College Asian Language & Culture Department  
Minneapolis Japanese School  
Minneapolis Institute of Art  
Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese  
Minnesota Orchestra  
Mu Performing Arts  
NDSU-Emily Reynolds  
Historic Costume Collection  
Twin Cities Aikido Center  
UMN Dept. of Asian Languages and Literatures, Japanese Language Program  
University of North Dakota-Grand Forks  
Winona State University Global Studies Dept.





## Remembering Shirley Huskins by J. Bernard (Ben) van Lierop



*Shirley Huskins (second from right) at the 2017 Mondale Gala*

Shirley Huskins, founding member and Emeritus Director of the Japan America Society of Minnesota, passed away on December 27, 2019. Shirley and her late husband Bill joined JASM in 1972. They had just returned to Minnesota after 10 years of living in Japan.

Along with other stalwart, visionary leaders such as Rev. Andrew Otani, Ruth and Earl Tanbara, Kimi Hara, and Dr. Neal Gault, Shirley served on the JASM board of directors and provided consistent leadership in countless initiatives and events. These individuals developed JASM into the vibrant civic organization it is today.

JASM was a completely volunteer organization from its founding to 1990. There was no office or staff. Members of the board served in various roles handling administrative duties. Shirley volunteered to be the Membership Coordinator, a role that she enjoyed for many years. Joyce Beauchaine, a longtime friend of Shirley, mentioned that Shirley took the position of Membership Coordinator very seriously. "Shirley opened a PO Box at the Central post office in Minneapolis. She would go every week to the post office to pick up the mail for JASM and handle any membership requests," said Joyce. Shirley was very organized. She maintained the membership information on index cards and stored them in a shoe box at her home.

Shirley was also supportive of other Japan-related organizations in the Twin Cities. She served actively on the boards of the Normandale Garden Association and the Saint Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee. Throughout the years, Shirley remained active with JASM, generously volunteering for events and contributing financially as well. In 2009, Shirley was presented with the Mondale Award for Japan-Minnesota Partnership. Shirley was a person with deep love for Japan, its culture and people. She gave generously of her time and energy to serve as a bridge between Japan and the United States in Minnesota.

Shirley, we will miss your consistent, positive presence at JASM events. Your passion for building relationships between the people of America and Japan has been a great inspiration.

*- J. Bernard (Ben) van Lierop, former JASM Executive Director*

## New Intern: Miku Ushiki



*Miku Ushiki*

Hello everyone! My name is Miku Ushiki. I am the new Membership Coordinator at JASM. I am an exchange student at the University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts. I grew up in Tokyo, Japan and came to study in Minnesota last September. I am majoring in international relations, especially focusing on Asian political history.

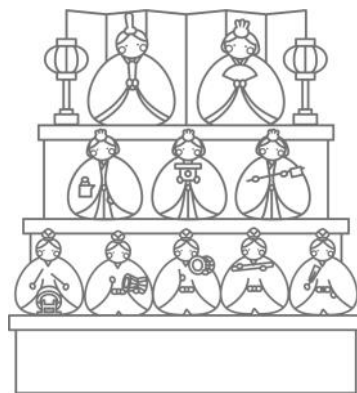
It has been a great experience to spend my junior year as a college student in Minnesota. I have been amazed by

Minnesota's beautiful outdoors, including the incredible amount of snow, and by how different everything is here from Japan. Thanks to an abundance of resources for learning and a lot of supportive Minnesota people I met last semester, I am enjoying the process of getting adopted here so much: becoming a Minnesotan, hopefully!

Growing up in Japan, the United States has been always a mysterious country to me. Even since I was born the way the two countries form their relationship has been changing. After earning a bachelor's degree, I hope to come back to the US and continue my study. I am looking forward to meeting everyone, and I appreciate for this precious opportunity to be a member and engage in the community of JASM.

## Hinamatsuri - Doll Festival or Girl's Day

*Hinamatsuri* — the doll festival which is also called Girl's Day — is observed on March 3 in Japan to celebrate female children and pray for their continued health and happiness. The holiday is also known as *momo no sekku* (peach festival), and is one of five *sekku* or seasonal festivals celebrated through the year. To mark *Hinamatsuri*, families display ceramic dolls dressed in the ornate decorative robes of the ancient imperial court.



During *Hinamatsuri* girls hold parties with their friends. Typical foods enjoyed include *hina-arare* (rice crackers), *hishi mochi* (diamond shaped rice cakes), *chirashizushi* ("scattered" sushi in a bowl), *ichigo daifuku* (strawberries wrapped in rice cake filled with red bean paste), and *amazake*, a non-alcoholic sake.

## MN Grassroots Development: MCTJ

Back in September 2018, JASM began a series called *MN Grassroots Development* to highlight Minnesota organizations striving toward good US-Japan relations. The series gives organizations a platform to showcase what they do and what they are planning for the future. This month's organization is the Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese (MCTJ).

The school year is half over and teacher and student activities are in full swing. MCTJ (Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese) has had several events. We had our fall meeting in October, and twelve teachers of K-12 and college were able to attend. Then K-12 schools had Japanese Day at the Minnesota Zoo. We had more than 600 student participants attend the half-day language exchange event. In late October and November we had our local, state, and then national world language teacher conventions, where several MCTJ teachers presented about language education methods.

Coming up: the annual J-Quiz competition. Our top students are working hard to compete for the opportunity to travel to Washington DC to compete nationally. Another big event is the CATJ (Conference of the Central Association of Teachers of Japanese) conference in May. Educators from around the US will be discussing topics on "*Japanese Language Education in Diversifying Communities* 多様化社会における日本語教育." Macalester College will be hosting the event, and many local educators will be presenting as well. It is a great opportunity to exchange ideas regarding the current issues of our shared profession.

Finally, Mori no Ike 森の池, the Japanese language village, is getting ready for a record number of participants again this summer. They also are working to hire staff, but are also fundraising for a permanent site. The land is purchased; they just need support in building authentic Japanese lodging to make it a "small Japan" in northern Minnesota.

Thank you JASM for your continued support of J-Quiz and everything else you do for students and teachers in Minnesota.

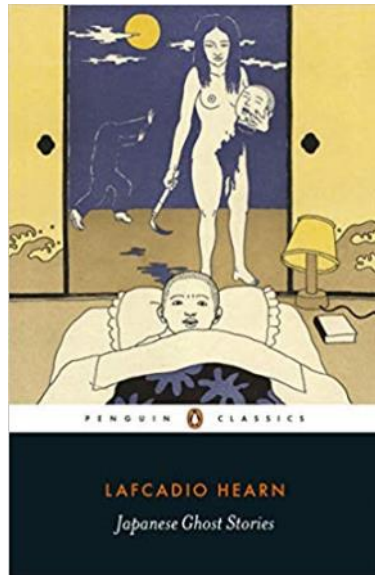
- Laura Moy



*MCTJ fall meeting*

## Tom Haeg's Book Review

*Japanese Ghost Stories; Lafcadio Hearn, Penguin Classics, edited by Paul Murray, 2019.*



This narrative anthology of the Japanese occult by Hearn (1850-1904) is a marvelous collection of short stories quick to horrify and sure to frighten, even without a Lantern Festival. Hearn was Greek by birth, educated in the UK and Ireland, and worked on police-beat journalism assignments in Cincinnati, New Orleans and the West Indies. He spent his last but most prolific 14 years in Japan.

In Japan at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hearn honed his unique literary skills

by abandoning his journalism career to exclusively focus on Japanese fictional macabre. Its nativist folklore, once reposed in abandoned Buddhist texts, were translated into English for him by his Japanese wife, Setsu, who was daughter to a once-prominent samurai family.

Our JASM reader may be more familiar with the term *kwaidan*, or Japanese ghost stories. Yup, that *kwaidan*. He originally wrote and perfected them in a laconic style for an American audience, not Japanese. Ironically, the popularity of this genre in Japan now is as strong as ever 100 years after his death.

Yet here is what I really find interesting. Even though Japan was isolated from the rest of the world during this entire folklore period, over 1,500 years, one cannot gainsay the most remarkable resemblances between *kwaidan* and similar ghostly horror stories in Elizabethan or Shakespearean literature of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Undoubtedly, this Western prose must have had an impact upon Hearn while growing up, to later facily identify and then resurrect similar Japanese themes. For example, think of all of the apparitions in Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Macbeth, Richard III, Henry VI, etc. He must have recognized in the Japanese texts all of the same occult tropes used to explain the unexplainable: supernatural interventions carrying out acts of revenge by ghostly apparitions. The likenesses are uncanny. For example, in his tale "Of a Promise Broken", a husband betrays his deceased spouse by remarrying; then the deceased's angry ghost takes revenge. Move over, Hamlet. Next question: which came first? Or is this all just coincidental? Perhaps it just represents the universality of language.

Also see another recent collection, *Japanese Tales of Lafcadio Hearn* (Princeton Press, 2019, edited by Andrei Codrescu). It, too, contains stories now taught to Japanese schoolchildren attesting to Hearn's keen insight into the Japanese supernatural.

- Tom Haeg



## Nihonjinkai Corner

This month, I thought it would be nice to feature Kazuko (Kay) Merritt and Keiko Young, who (along with Yoko) make most of the cards you see for sale at the Japanese Library or at any of our fundraising events throughout the year.

Kay started making cards for Nihonjinkai about five years ago. Keiko is the “veteran” of the group (along with Yoko) and has been making greeting cards for twelve years! She started in the Year of the Mouse, so she has literally come full circle.

These talented ladies use their folding skills to create origami figures, shapes, and decorations from beautiful paper Yoko purchased during her visits to Japan over the years. It's very expensive paper, and not something you can just pick up at a Michael's or JoAnn's store. Each designer has their own style and method, and everything is done on a volunteer basis. I am told Keiko spends about four hours per day creating! We are continually amazed by her detailed creations of flowers, animals and dolls. Kay is known for her brightly colored butterflies, hearts and flowers. She is expanding her repertoire to include Kitty-chan and other familiar favorites. Kay says she is being taught by “the master” Keiko-san!

I'm impressed by the time these ladies take to create each individually unique greeting card. We appreciate their work so much! Stop by the library or any participating event to check out the new styles.

Don't forget to join our Facebook group:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1644814705588014/>

- Karen Harwerth



Photo by  
Ackerman + Gruber

**Yoko Breckenridge**  
**612-839-0008**



## Consulate Visit Information

### 領事出張サービスのお知らせ ミネソタ州ブルーミントン

実施日 令和2年2月20日（木曜日）

時間 9時30分から12時15分まで 及び  
 13時15分から16時まで

会場 Holiday Inn Express & Suites Bloomington  
 7770 Johnson Avenue South,  
 Bloomington, MN 55435  
 電話 1-952-893-9999

- 領事出張サービスでは、遠隔地にお住まいの在留邦人の皆様のパスポートの申請または交付、各種証明の申請、戸籍・国籍の届出、在外選挙人名簿登録の申請、在留届の提出などを受け付けています。
- パスポートの交付を希望される方は、令和2年2月6日（木）までに当館宛てに郵便仮申請制度（注）を利用して、パスポートの仮申請を済ませてください。  
 （注）郵便仮申請（注）によりパスポートの交付を希望される方は、当館まで電話でご連絡いただくか、当館ホームページの「[遠隔地居住者による郵便仮申請](#)」をご参照ください。
- 各種証明の申請及び戸籍・国籍の届出につきましては、いずれも予約制です。必ず事前に当館までご連絡ください。
- 旅券および証明手数料は、当日会場で現金にてお支払いいただきます。クレジットカード、パーソナルチェックはご利用できません。

#### 在シカゴ日本国総領事館

CONSULATE GENERAL OF JAPAN IN CHICAGO  
 737 North Michigan Avenue Suite 1100  
 Chicago, IL 60611  
 電話 1-312-280-0400 / FAX 1-312-280-9568  
 ホームページ [http://www.chicago.us.emb-japan.go.jp/itortop\\_ja/index.html](http://www.chicago.us.emb-japan.go.jp/itortop_ja/index.html)

## 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 Nihonjinkai）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下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: [ybreckenridge@cbburnet.com](mailto:ybreckenridge@cbburnet.com)

(Nihonjinkai monthly meeting is every 2nd Monday of the month at noon. The meeting is held at 4231 Bloomington Ave S. Minneapolis, MN 55407).

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## Advertise in the Tsushin!

### 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

### 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.



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www.mn-japan.org

Tsūshin  
February 2020

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

## 2020 Shinnenkai

