

Japan America Society of Minnesota



通 信

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

January 2021 Vol. 30, No. 1

A Happy New Year 謹賀新年

明けましておめでとうございます



Thank you very much for all of your support during difficult times in 2020! Even though it was a unique year for all of us, JASM is still here and doing as

much as we can to serve our community. It is all because of your support! We are continuing our efforts in 2021 as well.

JASM made a few changes this year:

We moved out of our beloved office in St. Anthony Main and the team will be working from their homes. This was a strategic move on our part to save where we can save during the pandemic. We are hoping to be able to move into an office when we can go back to our in-person programs. Please see new JASM address below.

In other news: we have a new logo! We introduced our new logo to JASM members who attended the Annual Meeting. This new logo was reimagined by local Japanese graphic designer Ken Sakurai. Ken is an amazing designer who has been active in the Twin Cities and beyond. We kept the previous design element of the north star inside of the sakura, but added more shapes and sizes in the new logo to represent the many different people who are a part of JASM. We would like to continue to develop relationships with other Japan-related organizations and this logo also represents the many different elements coming together to build our community. We hope to live up to what this logo represents and continue being a bridge to connect our two cultures. A huge "thank you" to [Ken Sakurai](#) for this wonderful logo redesign.

We hope we can see you in person soon. Please stay safe and well. And have a wonderful new year.

Rio Saito, Executive Director

New mailing address:

2700 Louisiana Ave S #26639, Minneapolis, MN 55426

Recap: Sake Tasting and Ceramic Talk: Thinking Outside the Bottle



Mr. Chris Griesse, Sake Story



Dr. Andreas Marks, Mia

On Thursday December 3, JASM held a webinar focusing on sake cup ceramics and, for the second time, sake tasting. This event featured art historian and head of the Japanese and Korean art department at Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) Dr. Andreas Marks and sake expert Chris Griesse from Sake Story.



Dr. Marks began the event by introducing a number of sake ceramics made by various Japanese artists including Fukumoto Fuku and Fukami Sueharu. These cups varied in size and shape. The vast majority were porcelain, though all varying in appearance. One had iron grains

embedded in the surface and another was made to look like a
See more pictures on page 2; more photos on page 8

Upcoming: J-Quiz 2021

J-Quiz 2021 is right around the corner. On **Saturday, February 20th** high school students from across Minnesota and Wisconsin will be gathering online, due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Despite the situation, our goal for J-Quiz hasn't changed: namely, to increase cultural awareness and understanding and to bring together students who have an interest in Japan. The high school students will compete using their knowledge of Japanese language and culture.

More information will be provided in the next Tsushin. Until then, please visit our website at mn-japan.org for updates.



がんばってください!

Letter from the JASM President



Elizabeth Fehrmann,
JASM President

Dear JASM family and friends,

明けましておめでとうございます! Welcome to 2021 and the Year of the Ox!

First: 2020 was a difficult year. Lives and plans were interrupted worldwide, and we've all had to be more flexible, patient, and understanding than ever before. In spite of the hardship, we managed to host a whopping 20 events (18 of those online) and increase both our membership and overall virtual

outreach. Thank you to all who have supported JASM and the broader Japan-Minnesota community this past year.

Next, though we still have contended with certain restrictions due to the ongoing pandemic, we will keep moving forward!

With regard to our events: due to the persistence of the COVID-19 coronavirus in Minnesota, we will continue to host our events virtually to ensure everyone's safety. That means several of our upcoming annual traditions — Shinnenkai and J-Quiz — will be changing their format a bit. The office and event planning teams are working hard to make sure that even though we can't gather together in person, we can still remotely deliver the same core content and spirit of those events.

With regard to our office team: Rio Saito, Executive Director, and Yoko Ueno, Program Manager, continue to adapt in our (now) fully-remote office and continue look for new and better ways of working. They've worked really hard this past year to deliver steady, seamless support for the JASM community while expanding their own skillsets and toolkits; I know that their passion and commitment will be key to our success over the next couple years and beyond!

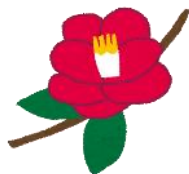
With regard to our Board of Directors: we are in the process of launching our new strategic-based structure, which I believe will enable us to make significant progress on some of our long-standing goals in support of the JASM mission. We will be taking steps to provide JASM with a solid foundation for operational growth as well as expand our core audience and programming offerings in new directions.

Finally, though the environment is still unstable, I hope everyone has found ways to not only survive, but thrive as much as you can. The continued disruptions and uncertainties are frustrating, but I urge everyone to keep following state health and safety guidelines so that we can all look forward to a return to our in-person gatherings in the (hopefully) not-too-distant future.

Until next time, please stay safe!

Take care,

Elizabeth Fehrmann



Recap: Sake Tasting and Ceramic Talk: Thinking Outside the Bottle continues...



"Kanpai" (cheers) together with the participants after the talks

shell. There was also a large cup called a *hikidashi* piece, created by immediately pulling the clay out of the kiln when firing is complete to create its rough, unique shape.

Chris Griese led the next part of the event — the sake tasting.

Mr. Griese graciously gave an introduction to each brewery and described how each



sake is unique, with a brief overview of how each were made.

The first sake was Miyashita "Treasure Ship" Junmai Ginjo from Okayama City, Okayama, then Kitsukura "Taruzake" (barrel-aged) Honjozo from Saku, Nagano, and finally Tsukinowa "Midnight Moon" Daiginjo from Morioka City, Iwate. The webinar wrapped up after a few questions were answered, ranging from the use of water to sake brewing in the US.



Thank you so much to everyone who attended, and especially Dr. Andreas Marks and Chris Griese for introducing us to the wonderful world of sake and Japanese ceramics!

Membership News (11/21-12/20, 2020)

Thanks to the following new JASM members:

Dane Giles, Melissa Hepokoski, Kevin Hollahan, Briana Johnson, Nancy Lunning, Naomi Oshiro

Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Jeffrey and Mitsuko Hensley, Kathleen Hollahan, Joshua and Emily Jabas, Katrina Little, David Mixon, Laura Moy, Richard Ryan, David Swanlund

Thanks to the following renewing

Corporate members:

Suishin Restaurant
Minnesota Foreign-Trade Zone 119
Minnesota Trade Office

JASM Fundraising Opportunity with “ShopWithScrip”

2020 was a challenging year for JASM, along with most nonprofit organizations across the country. Thanks to your generous support during these troubling times, JASM has been able to forge forward, fulfilling our mission of building bridges between the people of Minnesota and Japan. However, as a small nonprofit focused on education, arts, and cultural services, JASM remains very vulnerable.

We are asked every day to make charitable donations to worthy causes from limited resources. However, this is not another request for a donation. Well, kind of... What if there was a way to help raise funds for JASM just by leading your normal life, making standard purchases? Well, there is!

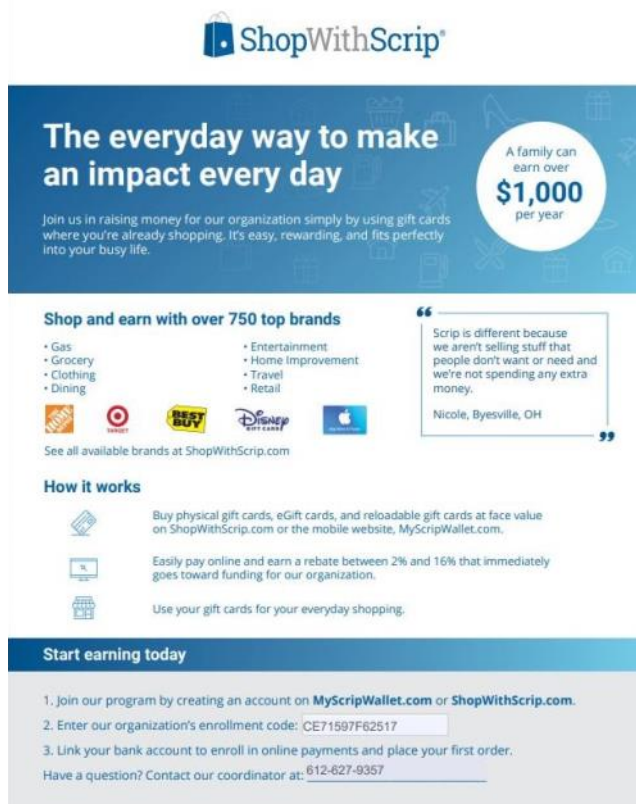
With the RaiseRight mobile app by ShopWithScrip you can help raise money for JASM doing everyday activities, like buying groceries, gas, shopping on Amazon, or getting your morning Caribou or Starbucks. This is done by buying gift cards for local merchants via the app. You receive the full value of the card while a percentage is also donated to JASM.

I am amongst a couple JASM members who have been using this service for several months and find it a fun, fast, and easy way to support JASM while I go about my daily life. With just one or two of us taking advantage of this fundraising activity, the impact is understandably small. But what if 10, 20, 50, 100 members chipped in? That would make a HUGE impact and help secure the survival of JASM long into the future.

Please give me a call or send me an email if you are interested in learning more about how you can help support JASM via your daily purchases!

Marc Blehert
mblehert@yahoo.com, 763-280-2108

*If you would like to order physical gift card through ShopWithScrip,
 please contact jasm@us-japan.org
 Please click [here](#) to download the flyer below.*



ShopWithScrip®

The everyday way to make an impact every day

Join us in raising money for our organization simply by using gift cards where you're already shopping. It's easy, rewarding, and fits perfectly into your busy life.

A family can earn over **\$1,000** per year

Shop and earn with over 750 top brands

- Gas
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See all available brands at ShopWithScrip.com

How it works

- Buy physical gift cards, eGift cards, and reloadable gift cards at face value on ShopWithScrip.com or the mobile website, MyScripWallet.com.
- Easily pay online and earn a rebate between 2% and 16% that immediately goes toward funding for our organization.
- Use your gift cards for your everyday shopping.

Start earning today

1. Join our program by creating an account on MyScripWallet.com or ShopWithScrip.com.
2. Enter our organization's enrollment code:
3. Link your bank account to enroll in online payments and place your first order.

Have a question? Contact our coordinator at: [612-627-9357](tel:612-627-9357)

“Scrip is different because we aren't selling stuff that people don't want or need and we're not spending any extra money.”
 Nicole, Byesville, OH

*Please thank our members
 with your support!*

Corporate Benefactor Members

Anime Twin Cities, Inc.
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 MTS Systems Corporation
 Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.
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 Economic Club of Minnesota
 Global Minnesota
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 JETRO Chicago
 JP Network, St. Cloud State University
 KCC-Japan Education Exchange
 Macalester College Asian Language & Culture Department
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 Mu Performing Arts
 NDSU-Emily Reynolds
 Historic Costume Collection
 Twin Cities Aikido Center
 UMN Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
 University of North Dakota-Grand Forks
 Winona State University Global Studies Dept.

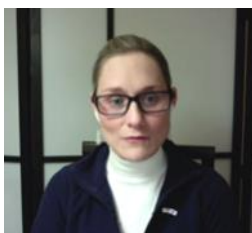


Recap: Annual Meeting 2020



This year, JASM held its Annual Meeting on Tuesday evening December 15th. As with our previous 2020 events, we held our Annual Meeting online.

After a brief explanation of how the night would work due to the online format, JASM President Elizabeth Fehrmann previewed the agenda. We were then given a succinct intro by Ron Leonhardt, the new Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Minnesota, as well as opening remarks by Consul-General Kenichi Okada, Consul-General of Japan in Chicago.



*Elizabeth Fehrmann,
JASM President*

Ms. Fehrmann then discussed some of this year's organizational highlights such as our strengthened desire to deepen relationships, membership growth status, and a look at future strategic planning as far as is feasible. Afterwards, Treasurer Yoko Torigoe presented this year's financial report and Executive Director Rio Saito reviewed event highlights.

We then proceeded to our officer election in which both Joe Montgomery and Tom Whaley were elected to the JASM board. Additionally, we honored outgoing JASM board members Chris Armacost, Kate Thersleff, and Ron Leonhardt for their hard work with JASM.

JASM Annual Meeting
New Branding Reveal



Lastly, before we gave each other a long Minnesota goodbye, we were presented with the new JASM logo which you can view on the first page of this month's Tsushin.

We offer special thanks to everyone who attended our Annual Meeting 2020. We are incredibly thankful for all of your support and precious time spent with us in the year of 2020.

JASM Annual Meeting

Agenda

- Opening remarks from Consul General Kenichi Okada
- 2020 Organizational Highlights, Financial Report, and Event Highlights
- Annual meeting business:
 - Report on Officer Elections
 - Conduct election for new Board of Directors members
 - Review Leadership Team status
- New Branding update
- Plans for 2021 and closing remarks

Thank You, JASM Volunteers

We would like to send huge thanks to the following volunteers who helped JASM at the end of 2020.



Sarah Farley

First, we would like to express our gratitude to Sarah Farley, the main volunteer for the end-of-year fundraiser. Sarah created more than 50 kimono silk masks! Her thoughtfully and precisely sewed masks were very popular on the JASM Marketplace. (Only a few of them are still available!) We received many compliments from buyers and some of them purchased twice. It was great additional support for JASM since

during the pandemic it has been not easy for us to conduct our usual events. We thank Sarah profoundly and also those who ordered her masks. They made our fundraising a success.

Secondly, we would like to give a shout-out to three volunteers who helped with the office move over the last four months. We met each other on different days each week to avoid a crowded situation in the office. Satomi Mitani took care of the donation items we received as well as the JASM Marketplace. Keiko Doi and Mika Maeda worked on sorting documents – shredding and tossing some – and many other tasks.



*Satomi Mitani wearing the
kimono mask*



Keiko Doi (left) and Mika Maeda (right)

Finally, our very reliable board members, Clint Conner and Chris Armacost, as well as former JASM President, Marc Blehert, moved out the heavy furniture from the office and transported it to the storage facility on a very cold day.

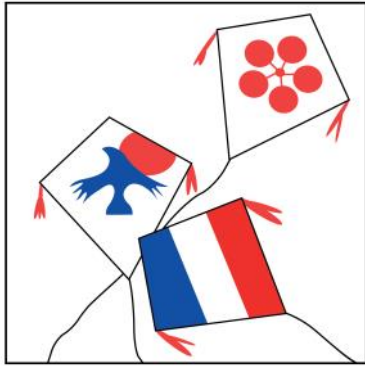
We really appreciate all of your hard work and support for JASM! Without the help of volunteers, we wouldn't have been able to relocate the office and have a good start for 2021.



(from left) Clint Conner, Yoko Ueno and her daughter, Chris Armacost, Marc Blehert, and Rio Saito in front of the storage

Grassroots Development: SPNSCC

Back in September 2018, JASM began a series called MN Grassroots Development to highlight Minnesota organizations striving for 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 Saint Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee (SPNSCC). Here's a recap of their anniversary celebration.



SAINT PAUL - NAGASAKI
SISTER CITY COMMITTEE

SPNSCC celebrates 65 years of friendship via Zoom

The first ever cross-Pacific Zoom celebration between the Saint Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee (SPNSCC) and the Nagasaki St. Paul Sister City Committee (NSPSCC) took place Saturday, December 5 (Minnesota time)/Sunday, December 6 (Nagasaki time). The 65th anniversary of our sister city relationship was the impetus for this special event.

Highlights included greetings from Mayor Carter, a recorded performance of a Christmas medley by the Nagasaki Symphony Orchestra, a live ballet performance from Nagasaki, and Year in Review videos by both SPNSCC and NSPSCC. The best part for many of the participants was seeing their friends. Many of the participants from Nagasaki and quite a few of the SPNSCC members and friends have traveled to each other's city.

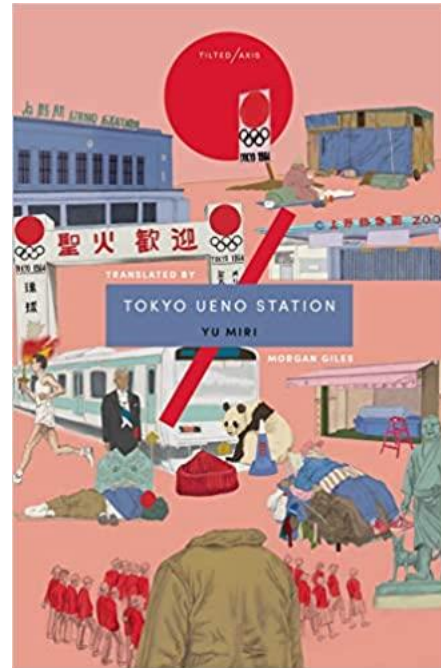
There were special greetings from Ritsuko Fukuda and some of the tennis players she had brought to St. Paul. Fumiko Yamaguchi and Chizuko Miyazaki showed some of the 65 face masks they have made for SPNSCC members. Takeshi Shigyo represented Nagasaki City Hall, Yoko Ueno represented JASM, several members of the Saint Paul Civic Symphony took part, and some thirty other people participated.

Everyone is hopeful that in-person exchanges, many planned for 2020, can take place in 2021. Happy New Year, everyone!

JoAnn Blatchley, Co-President
Saint Paul – Nagasaki Sister City Committee



Tom Haeg's Book Review



Tokyo Ueno Station; Yu Miri, Tilted Axis Press, 2020.

When I am in Tokyo, Ueno is my default neighborhood. I like the park, the train station, and the whole neighborhood. It is neat, comfortable, and convenient. It is easy to be at home there. But, after reading *Tokyo Ueno Station*, when I am next there, I will pause to observe more than what readily appears on the surface.

Station is narrated by an omniscient ghost reminiscing about the homeless in Ueno. As a social commentary, we learn about fractures in Japanese society: minorities, labor issues, suicide, class inequalities, nonsensical rituals, social rigidity, etc. Meanwhile, the ghost-narrator apologetically describes his tortured family situation growing up after World War II. While he is sorry for what he became – he, too, was homeless – he still is bent on blaming society for his misguided life, a life which is a microcosm for the rest of the homeless people in Ueno Park.

While Miri speaks truth to power, I found the book lacked transition. That is to say, it did not move well from Point A to Point B. There is no plot. Yes, I understand that there are homeless people in Japan. Yes, it is probably not completely their fault. Yes, the authorities seemingly do not have it on their agenda. But there is no call for action in the novel; it offers no significant solution for change. So, while the writing is good, the storyline just seemed static.

Others may disagree. *Station* won the National Book Award for Translated Literature and was cited by the New York Times for a Notable Book of the Year award. And Miri is a prolific author with other accredited works. But, in my opinion, the praise is just not merited this time.

Tom Haeg

臨時領事事務所開設のお知らせ（1月分）

シカゴ市及びクック郡は新型コロナウイルスの感染が拡大している州からの来訪者に14日間の自主隔離を義務付ける緊急旅行命令を発出しており、当館管轄10州のうち、アイオワ州、カンザス州、ミズーリ州、ネブラスカ州、ノースダコタ州、サウスダコタ州、ウィスコンシン州、ミネソタ州及びインディアナ州が対象州に指定されています。

これらの州にお住まいの方が当館にお越しいただくことが実質的に困難になる中、当館ではこれらの州にお住まいの皆さまを対象に領事サービスの提供を継続するため、以下のとおり臨時領事事務所を開設します。

新型コロナウイルス感染拡大防止の観点から、臨時領事事務所は完全予約制になりますので、利用をご希望の方は必ず事前に電話でご予約をお願いします。

なお、新旅券受領の方につきましては、旅券仮申請書類が当館到着後にご予約願います。

また、当日のご予約のない場合、上記の観点等から、入場をお断りすることがあります。必要に応じて来年2月以降も継続する予定であり、2月以降の予定は決まり次第お知らせします。

【予約方法】

当館開館日の受付時間内に下記の電話番号宛に電話で予約をお願いします。

電話番号：312（280）0400

【注意】

旅券等の申請書類等を郵送申請する場合は、着実な事務処理の観点から、下記の「申請書類等を郵送する場合の当館必着日」までに届くよう時間に余裕を持って申請をお願いいたします。

【開設日】

●2021年1月13日（水）（申請書類等を郵送する場合の当館必着日：1月4日（月））

●2021年1月28日（木）（申請書類等を郵送する場合の当館必着日：1月19日（火））

【開設時間】

10時30分から12時15分及び

13時15分から15時まで

【会場】

Double Tree by Hilton Hotel Chicago Oak Brook
1909 Spring Road Oak Brook, IL 60523
TEL:630(472)6000



New JASM Logo

Over time you will see our new logo everywhere on our website, SNS/social media, and event promotions. Here are some variations of the new JASM logo created by [Ken Sakurai](#), who is introduced on page 1. We thank Ken Sakurai for his great work.



令和3年度（2021年）ミネアポリス日本語補習授業校 園児・児童募集

<http://www.minneapolisjapaneseschool.org/>

4月からの幼稚園及び小学部の新入生を募集します！

クラス	対象年齢	体験入學日	試験/面接	募集期間
おひさま組 親子教室	満2歳	1月31日	2月6日 (面接)	令和2年 11月13日～ 令和3年 1月2日
幼稚園 年少組	満3歳	1月16日	1月23日 (面接)	令和2年 11月13日～ 令和3年 1月2日
小学部 1年	満6歳	2月13日	2月13日 (試験/面接)	令和2年 11月13日～ 令和3年 1月30日

対象年齢*は令和3年4月1日時点での年齢参加をご希望の方は、
ハワード seito@minneapolisjapaneseschool.org までご連絡ください。
(今年度は体験入學・試験・面接オンラインでの開催です。)

Online trial Classes and Enrollment Interview at Minneapolis Japanese School

Class	Date of Birth	Trial Classes	Interview & Examination	Application Deadline
Parent and Toddler class	4/2/2018～ 4/1/2019	1/31/2021	2/6/2021 (Interview only)	1/2/2021
Preschool class	4/2/2017～ 4/1/2018	1/16/2021	1/23/2021 (Interview only)	1/2/2021
1st Grade	4/2/2014～ 4/1/2015	2/13/2021		1/30/2021

If you are interested in attending, please contact
Midori Howard at seito@minneapolisjapaneseschool.org.

Advertise in the Tsushin!

Advertisement Rates

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

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**

Calendar

February

J-Quiz 2021, Feb. 20

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	\$20
Household	\$50
(2 adults plus children under 18)	

Japan America Society of Minnesota
43 Main Street SE Suite EH—131, Minneapolis, MN 55414

Become a JASM Member online

Support our mission and become a member!

1. Go to mn-japan.org
2. At the top, hover over 'Support' then click on '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 for those wishing to practice Japanese. We encourage those just beginning the language as well as native speakers to participate to meet new people, discuss experiences in Japan, or simply to speak Japanese.

This group currently meets regularly over Zoom. For more details, send an email to group coordinator Will Etkin: will.etkin@atgmail.com

Check out another conversation group: **Twin Cities Japanese Conversation Meetup Group** (<https://www.twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com/>)

Note: This is a private group. In order to join, a questionnaire must be completed at the web site linked above.

The goal of Twin Cities Japanese Conversation Meetup is language fluency in either Japanese or English. This group is for Japanese language learners who want to improve their Japanese speaking skills or/and native Japanese speakers who want to improve their English speaking. Those who just want to help out are also welcome.

Parts to the meetup: 自己紹介 (self-introductions), 質疑応答 (questions and answers about language) and 会話練習 (conversation practice).

Meetings: Edina (Monday), Minnetonka (Thursday), Saint Paul (Saturday).

Since March 16 the group is holding all meetings online.

For any question about this group, please email Mariquita Anderson: mariquita@twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com



J | A | S | M

JAPAN AMERICA SOCIETY
of MINNESOTA

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Minneapolis, MN 55426

jasm@us-japan.org
www.mn-japan.org

通信

Tsūshin
January 2021

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@us-japan.com

December 2020



Sake Tasting and Ceramic Talk: Thinking Outside the Bottle
Chris Griesse (middle) and Dr. Andreas Marks (right)

Annual Meeting 2020 (bottom right)
Elizabeth Fehrmann, JASM President (middle) and
Consul-General Kenichi Okada, Consul General of Japan
in Chicago (left)

