Japan America Society of Minnesota







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

January 2024 Vol. 33, No. 1

Happy New Year 謹賀新年

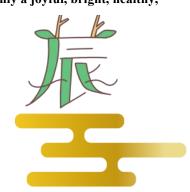


The Japan America Society of Minnesota wishes you and your family a joyful, bright, healthy,

prosperous, and happy new year!!

JASM Team

新年おめでとうございます。 昨年はひとかたならぬご厚情をいただき、誠にありがとうございまし た。 本年もどうぞよろしくお願い致します。 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

Recap: Annual Meeting 2023



Joe Montgomery, JASM Vice President

On Wednesday, December 13th at Taiyo International's office, JASM hosted its 2023 Annual Meeting. Many JASM members were in attendance ranging from brand new to veteran members.

The event was kicked off by JASM's Vice President Joe Montgomery who reviewed the 2023 membership statistics and treasury report, both of which have been steady.

Thanks to many of you who filled out the recent survey, Joe was able to present meeting goers with your feedback which coincided well with the strategic plan that the board worked on earlier this year. Many attendees confirmed and elaborated on the feedback and were able to provide great insight on what action JASM might take and how it might impact the strategic plan.

Joe then led the attendees through new board member nominations and voting. We are happy to announce that after a unanimous vote Joe will be returning for another term on

JASM's board and Ben Van Lierop and Jeff DuBois will be starting their first terms as board members in the new year.



... continued on page 4.

Save the date for New J-Quiz 2024 (Online) Everyone is welcome!



On Sunday, February 11th, JASM will host J-Quiz 2024. Please save the date! The JASM's new J-Quiz 2024 is for anyone of any age who is interested.

One of JASM's important missions is to support those who want to learn Japanese and get to know Japan better and we know there are so many of you, always studying and reading

about Japan. As we reached the 50th anniversary of our organization in 2023, we created this new Japan-focused trivia challenge for people of all ages who are learning about Japan.

Our goal for J-Quiz is to increase cultural awareness and understanding and to bring together people who have an interest in Japan.

What is the new J-Quiz?

There will be 30 questions regarding Japan and Japanese language. The participants can try fun quizzes to test knowledge of Japan! This event will also



include information about colleges that offer Japanese classes, plus cultural exhibition videos where experts will share their knowledge and skills with us. With Hopin's "networking" function, you can meet and chat with people who are learning Japanese and share ideas or ask questions!

Please visit our <u>website</u> to answer the sample questions and to watch the sample video!

This quiz is free for participants, but JASM appreciates voluntary donations. Stay turned for registration details!

Letter from JASM President



Last month, we conducted a survey of JASM members and stakeholders. Over 80 of you responded, and provided a ton of interesting information that will help us to decide JASM's direction in 2024 and beyond. In next month's Tsushin, we will include an article with more detail about the survey responses. Stay tuned!

Meanwhile, I want to highlight one comment that stood out to me:

"I think JASM could have a much bigger membership and more influence than it does."

I couldn't agree more! Members are the beating heart of JASM, and anybody who cares about the connection between Japan and Minnesota should become a member. By my count, that means we should have at least ten-thousand members. As of December 10th, we had a total of 228 active memberships, a slight increase from the 220 memberships we had on January 1st. Most of those memberships are bundles (families and organizations). If we figure an average of 3 members per membership, we are just shy of 700 members. We have a lot of opportunities to grow. Below are a few major elements of our plan to grow membership.

Outreach to Organizations: Our Membership Chair Peter Hill and Executive Director Rio Saito have been on a road show, visiting companies and nonprofits to discuss the benefits of joining JASM. A big thank you to new members Metoree, Taft, Stettinius & Hollister LLP, and Miller Milling Company. If you belong to an organization that has ties to Japan, Rio and Peter want to visit you, too. Please get in touch with <u>Rio</u> to discuss!

Automatic Membership Renewal: Last year, we had almost 70 new memberships the However, we also had 60 existing memberships that did not renew

We need to plug the leak in our membership bucket! In following up with members who did not renew, we found that one of the biggest reasons was that they were either unaware that their membership was expiring, or they forgot to renew it. Our membership system is currently set to require members to manually renew their memberships each year. In the next few months, we are going to roll out automatic renewal, which should improve our members. Members who prefer to continue renewing manually will be able to easily turn off automatic renewal.

T-shirts: Joining JASM should be fun, and so should referring new members. What could be more fun than getting an original JASM T -shirt? Suitable for collecting, displaying, and even wearing! If you have yet to join JASM, now is your chance to do so, and get a T-shirt. If you are already a member, refer three new members and get a T-shirt! See the related article on page # of this month's Tsushin for more details.

Just as with everything else we do at JASM, our effort to increase our membership relies heavily on our members and supporters. I hope you will help us out, and I look forward to reporting on a healthy membership gain in an upcoming Tsushin!

Bob Luck, JASM President

Annual Report 2023 Available



The 2023 Annual Report is ready for you to view. Please find it by clicking <u>here</u> or on the cover image above. Also, you can find previous annual reports on our website <u>here</u>. Available online are the "Letter from JASM President", the summary of the year, the financial report, membership transition, the 2023 events, list of board members, list of corporate members, and list of donors over \$100.

We greatly appreciate all the support we received in 2023. We also thank those who supported JASM but are not listed in the Annual Report because of the limited space. Those are the JASM members and friends, the volunteers, and the event participants.

We are looking forward to seeing you in the year of the Dragon!

Membership News (11/21 – 12/20, 2023)

Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Richard and Katharine Fournier, Phaeton Holland, Melanie Holmes, Bob and Hisayo Luck, Nancy Lunning, Joseph Montgomery, Izumi Mueller, Steven Nelson, Ben Picone, Richard Ryan, David Schultz, Frank Tsuchiya, Keith Vargo

Thanks to the following Corporate Members:

MGK Company

Japanese Conversation Clubs



<u>Minneapolis Japanese Conversation</u> <u>Club (formerly "Japanese Speaking</u> <u>Club")</u>

The Minneapolis Japanese Conversation Club is an informal group for those wishing to practice Japanese – all skill levels welcomed! The group also encourages native Japanese speakers who wish to practice their English to join, in addition to chatting

in Japanese. Emphasis is placed on free talk, so participants can cover a wide range of conversation topics.

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 enjoy speaking Japanese with one another.

The group meets bi-weekly on Saturday afternoons at Corner Coffee Uptown, with Zoom meetings between in-person meet-ups. Schedules are posted to the group's Facebook page, at the following link:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/minneapolisjapaneseclub/

In-person meeting Location: Corner Coffee Uptown, 1414 W 28th St., Minneapolis, MN 55408

*Note: A short questionnaire is required prior to joining. For more details, send an email to group coordinator Will Etkin: will.etkin"at"gmail.com



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

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 and/or 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). All meetings and study groups are held in *Discord*.

Current Schedule:

Su 8:30-10a N5 Study Group, Genki Lesson 10 M 7-8p N3の勉強会、「とびら」という教科書での第1課

W 7-8p 日本語会話, alternating weeks of in-person and virtual meetups

Th 7-8:30pm N3の勉強会、「とびら」の第7課 *Note: Proficiency in Hiragana is required prior to joining the group. For any question about this group, please email Mariquita Anderson: mariquita"at"twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com

Please thank our members with your support!

Corporate Benefactor Members

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

Corporate Patron Members Dorsey & Whitney LLP

Miller Milling Company

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Sakura Circle Membership Sam and Mirja Hanson Noriko Ishida Bob and Hisayo Luck John and Hiroko Shade

Recap: Annual Meeting 2023 continues...



For the closing portion, Executive Director Rio Saito gave an end-of-year summary. She was able to speak about a number of non-JASM events that JASM has been invited to take part in such as the Normandale Japanese Garden Festival, Anime Fusion, and even the reinstitution of Delta's direct flight from Minneapolis to Tokyo. JASM has also been continuing on with online events/seminars that have been able to reach a wider audience in places like Wisconsin and the Dakotas while inperson events such as JASM's annual Harukaze, Mondale Gala, and Obon Festival have continued to grow and be successful.

Special thank you to Taiyo International and Scott Smith for graciously allowing us to use their new office space to host this event.

In closing, thank you all for making 2023 an amazing year for JASM. JASM could not run without the help of all of its members and volunteers. We are grateful to each and every one of you and look forward to spending 2024 with you.

Lydia Rose, JASM Board Member



Mark Your Calendar for the JASM Events 2024



We would like to share the event calendar for 2024. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us for the exciting events!

We occasionally need volunteers for our events or events organized by other organizations. We will send emails to our members to recruit volunteers.

Sunday, February 11 J-Quiz (online) Thursday, April 18 New Member Social (in-person)) (Date:TBD)

Sunday, May 19 Harukaze (in-person)

Sunday, July14 Bonodori Workshop (in-person) (Date: TBD)

Sunday, August 18 Obon Festival (in-person)

September 7 *Charity Golf Scramble (in-person) (Date:TBD)* Saturday, November 16 Mondale Award and Scholarship

Gala (in-person)

December 12 Annual Meeting (in-person)

We will need volunteers at the following event: Sunday, August 18 Obon Festival (in-person)

We will have a booth at the events below which are organized

by other organization and need some volunteers: SPNSCC Cherry Tree Celebration June Burnsville International Festival June June CONvergence September Normandale Japanese Garden Festival



October Anime Fusion November Twin Cities Comic Con

The JASM office will be closed on the following days:

January 1	New Year's Day
January 2	New Year's Holiday
January 3	New Year's Holiday
January 15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 12	Lincoln's Birthday
February 19	Washington's Birthday
April 29	Showa Day
May 27	Memorial Day
June 19	Juneteenth
July 4	Independence Day
September 2	Labor Day
October 14	Columbus Day/Sports Day
November 11	Veterans Day
November 28	Thanksgiving
November 29	Day After Thanksgiving
December 25	Christmas
December 30	Year End Holiday
December 31	Year End Holiday



JASM Member Recruitment Campaign We need your help!



To continue our mission of enriching the life of Minnesota, by being a bridge between Minnesota and Japan, we finally created a JASM Tshirt that you can wear year round! Let people know that you are a friend of Japan/Minnesota by carrying JASM's sakura and NorthStar logo over your heart.

Proposed t-shirt design

It will be available to the public in the second week of 2024. We will make announcements when everything is ready to go.

This shirt is \$25 for non-JASM members and \$20 for JASM members. We are excited to have this beautiful T-shirt for you to feel the team spirit! We are doubly excited that we have ladies' fit and men's fit for the shirts! If you are ordering ladies size, please consider ordering one size bigger than any unisex size.



You can also work with us to grow JASM membership by bringing your friends and family to our circle! You can also work with us to grow JASM membership by bringing your friends and family to our circle!

New members who sign up will receive one T-shirt per membership. (One T-shirt per account. Family membership will count as one.) BUT, if you are an existing member, you will receive one t-shirt every time 3 of your friends and family become JASM members.

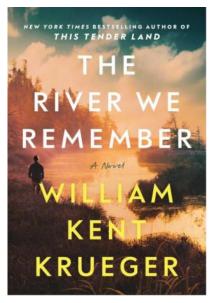
When your friends and family sign up, please remind them to put your name in the "Reference" section of the form. As soon as we collect three new members with your name, we will contact you and send you a shirt. This way, you can support JASM and look fabulous!

Stay tuned for pictures of the final product in the next email!

terested in volunteering?/ボランティア桁 里	Yes	~
Reference	Pease and the name of the person White encouraged you to join.	
Fax		
	SAVE CANCE.	

Tom Haeg's Book Review

The River We Remember; William Kent Krueger; Simon and Schuster, 2023; 421 pages.



In this character-driven murder mystery set in a small, rural Minnesota town in 1958, we are introduced to Kyoko Bluestone who becomes a pivotal sort in the plot's enigma. Kyoko is Japanese and a Nagasaki survivor who married Noah Bluestone, a local of Dakota descent and a World War II veteran who was stationed in Japan during the military occupation. While experiencing isolation in the small town, we learn how Noah and Kyoko as a suspect couple passively rise above the fray to endure prejudice to acquit themselves to gain the town's acceptance.

What ingeniously distinguishes *River* as a murder mystery is geography. The land ("...we love this place enough to die for it...") and the river ("...to look down to this river is to fall in love.") become central characters like all others with their frailties, foibles, and faults. It is a clever metaphorical technique enhancing the whodunit chase and the Bluestones are integral to this theme. Noah's ancestors were driven off the land and Kyoko's land was extinguished by the War.

Kent Krueger is the author of 19 books in the Cork O'Connor mystery series and a New York Times bestselling author with *The Tender Land* and *Ordinary Grace*. He lives in the Twin Cities.

Tom Haeg



令和6年度(2024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月からの幼稚部及び小学部の新入生を募集します!

4万からの幼稚師及び小子師の初八王と券朱しより:				
クラス	対象 年齢	体験 入学日	試験/面接	募集期間
おひさま 組 親子教室	満2歳	1月20日	1月 27 日 (面接)	令和5年 11月20日~ 令和6年 1月13日
幼稚部 年少組	満3歳	1月13日 (体験/ 面接)	-	令和5年 11月20日~ 令和6年 1月6日
小学部 1年	満6歳	-	2月3日 (試験/ 面接)	令和5年 11月20日~ 令和6年 1月27日

対象年齢は令和6年4月1日時点での年齢。参加をご希望の方は、 ガッドボイスseito@minneapolisjapaneseschool.org までご連絡くださ

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Trial	Classes and Enrollment Interview
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at Minicupons Japanese Senoor				
Class	Date of Birth	Trial Clas- ses	Interview & Examination	Application Deadline
Parent and Tod- dler class	4/2/2021 ~ 4/1/2022	1/20/2024	1/27/2024 (Interview only)	1/13/2024
Preschool class	4/2/2020 ~ 4/1/2021	1/13/2024	-	1/6/2024
1 st Grade	4/2/2017 ~ 4/1/2018	_	2/3/2024	1/27/2024

If you are interested in attending, please contact

Ayako Gadbois at seito@minneapolisjapaneseschool.org.

Recap: SPNSCC'S Annual Celebration Dinner



(Picture left): Performing Sansei Yonsei Kai, (Picture right) JoAnne Blatchley, SPNSCC President

The JASM office attended St. Paul Nagasaki Sister City Committee's Annual Celebration Dinner on snowy Saturday, December 9 at the Minnesota Humanities Center in Saint Paul.

Highlights of the evening were the keynote speech by Honorary Consul General Ron Leonhardt, the report of the trip to Nagasaki in October including a video of the Okunchi Festival and the exciting interactive games. There were also the shakuhachi flute and dance performances by Sansei Yonsei Kai.

We thank SPNSCC for their commitment to their mission and for working with us.

Thank You, Betty-san!



Betty Tisel has been a long-time member with us at JASM. From August 2019 until October 2023, she used her talents as an editor/proofreader every month to make sure that Tsushin is as mistake-free and understandable as possible.

Betty Tisel (left front) and Lydia Rose (right front), JASM Board Member and

Thank you so much for your long-term dedication as our proofreader, Betty-san! We appreciate your hard work and attention to details. We enjoyed the time successor of Betty-san spent working with you.

Once again, thank you Betty-san and also to our other JASM members. Your contributions to the community are what solidify the bond between Japan and Minnesota.

Exhibition at Mia: Chaos: Ken Matsubara's **Buddhist Masterwork**



Ken Matsubara, Japanese, born 1948, Chaos, 1983 (detail), two sixpanel folding screens (diptych), ink and color on paper. The Mary Griggs Burke Endowment Fund established by the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation and gift of funds from Nivin MacMillan 2022.49a,b © Ken Matsubara.

September 2, 2023 - April 14, 2024 Bell Family Decorative Arts Court (Gallery 333) Free Exhibition

Two paintings, 600 years apart: the 14th century Taima Mandala and the 20th century Chaos by Ken Matsubara. Despite the chronological distance between them, these two pieces are connected by Buddhist threads. In this installation, accompanied by the echoes of singing bowls, the visitor acts as the bridge between Matsubara's depiction of human struggle and the Taima Mandala's immaculate Pure Land. Take a moment to sit, be still, and focus on being with art.

Ken Matsubara was born in Toyama prefecture, Japan, in 1948. Growing up in a relative's temple, he admired and copied traditional Buddhist artworks displayed throughout the complex. In his late twenties, he apprenticed with Sanko Inoue, a renowned Japanese painter of Western abstraction. Chaos (1983) marked a moment of synthesis and departure. He merged his knowledge of Buddhist concepts with his teacher's abstraction to create a new form of representation, his own abstraction of space and sound.

Source: Chaos: Ken Matsubara's Buddhist Masterwork — Minneapolis *Institute of Art (artsmia.org)*

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the JASM Office jasm@mn-japan.org			
Jasin@nn-jaµan.vry	Japan America Soci P.O. Box 26639, Minne		
Calendar	Become a JAS		
February 11, J-Quiz 2023	 Support our mission and become a membration Go to mn-japan.org At the top, hover over 'Support' then click on 'Joint' Select your membership type and read the benefits instructions. You can also become a member using your smarth 		
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JAPAN AMERICA SOCIETY of MINNESOTA

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January Tsūshin 2024

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@mn-japan.com

December Events

