



JAPAN NOTES



JAPAN AMERICA SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS

Note 17.

Summer 2006



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Upcoming Events

JAPANESE FESTIVAL

Labor Day weekend Saturday, Sunday, and Monday.
September 2nd, 3rd and the 4th.

Located at the Missouri Botanical Garden

Visit the JAS Booth for sake, beer and sushi as well as the JAS Youth Committee Booth for yakisoba and okonomiyaki.

The sushi will be prepared by Chef Seki.

JAS FUNDRAISING GOLF TOURNAMENT FOR ST. LOUIS JAPANESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

Wednesday, September 20, Pevely Farm Golf Club

FOURMAN SCRAMBLE

8:00 AM SHOTGUN START

GOOD LUNCH and MANY DOOR PRIZES

JAS ANNUAL DINNER

Thursday, November 9th at Ces and Judy's at Le Chateau, Frontenac

Entertainment: St. Louis Osuwa Taiko

JAPANESE TRADITIONAL POTTERY OPENING

Early September to End of November,
at the St. Louis Mercantile Library.

For your information:

We arrange lectures and presentations to schools on Japan, the people of Japan, and their culture and customs.

We also make arrangements for demonstrations and performances of: Bonsai, Calligraphy, Crafts, Flower Arrangement, Harie, Kimono, Japanese Music and Dance, Martial Arts, Origami, etc.

For more information please contact
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One man made a difference because he believed that it was the right thing to do.

The man was Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat who made an extraordinarily courageous decision against his own government that resulted in saving more than 6,000 Jews.

The story took place in the summer of 1940 at the Japanese Consulate at Kaunas in Lithuania, where Chiune Sugihara had been assigned as Deputy Consul primarily for intelligence gathering.

This intriguing but heart moving story was told by Anne Hoshiko Akabori, Chairperson of ***Visas for Life Foundation***, a non-profit educational foundation to perpetuate Sugihara's altruistic behavior and humanitarian intervention, in St. Louis in April in a series of lectures.

The series was co-sponsored by *Japan America Society of St. Louis* with *Center for International Studies-UMSL*, *Japanese American Citizens League*, *Jewish Community Center*, *Holocaust Museum and Learning Center*, *St. Louis Jewish Book Festival* and *United Hebrew Congregation*.

If you want to know more about this truly courageous man, you will want to read the books listed below.

The Gift of Life

Author: Anne Hoshiko Akabori,
Publisher: Edu-Comm Plus
Price: \$18

Visa for Life

Author: Yukiko Sugihara (Chiune's wife)
Translated by Hiroki Sugihara with Anne Hoshiko Akabori
Publisher: Edu-Comm Plus
Price: \$ 16.00

In Search of Sugihara

Author: Hillel Levine
Publisher: The Free Press-1996
Price: \$25.00



Event Report - Sake at Seki

In the evening of June 6, Japan America Society of St. Louis had a special event, " Sake at Seki " at the popular Japanese restaurant " *Seki* "

29 people came to the gala and had a wonderful time tasting eight different kinds of premium sake from eight different sake producing areas in Japan from Hokkaido to Kumamoto and relishing ten different Japanese cuisines prepared by Chef Seki specially for the evening.

Out of the many different kinds of premium sake " *Seki* " carries, Chef Seki selected the following eight brands.

HARUSHIKA from *Nara*

Light and smooth. Extra dry with medium body. Sharp citrus flavor with crisp bitter finish.

OTOKOYAMA from *Hokkaido*

Soft and smooth. Clean aroma of apple and pear are harmonized with mineral, grain with a touch of creamy aroma. Round and mild sweetness and fruity acidic flavor are balanced nicely.

TSUKASABOTAN from *Kochi*

Light and smooth. Fragrant aroma of young banana. Very clean dry sake with elegant savory flavor. Very short aftertaste.

SUISHIN from *Hiroshima*

Rich and dry. Sweetness wrapped by rich, fresh acidity that is light and smooth and light on your palate gives very elegant impression.

ARAMASA from *Akita*

Rich and flavorful.
Gentle grain-like aroma of freshly cooked steamed rice. Smooth round taste with a hint of bitterness like that of wild plants.

SHIRATAKI from *Niigata*

Smooth and rich.
Dry sake with fruity aromas. Round taste with expanding savory flavors.

BISHONEN from *Kumamoto*

Rich. Savory aroma is nicely harmonized with grain and dairy products. Sweet flavor and acidity are balanced well and gives powerful impression. Aftertaste is long with bitter flavor.

SAWANOI from *Tokyo*

Flavorful, light and smooth. Dry and well-balanced fruity and floral aroma turns into savory taste. Smooth and delicate on palate.

Everybody said they were all excellent but *HARUSHIKA* from Nara turned out to be the most popular according to the votes tallied at the end of the gala. It got 35% of the votes. The next to the best was *SUISHIN* from Hiroshima and the third runner up was a four way tie among *Otokoyama*, *Aramasa*, *Shirataki* and *Sawanoi*.

Conversational Japanese

Common Expressions in the Work Place (Part Two)

In the last issue we showed you how to use どうも *do'omo* , one of the expressions you often hear at the Japanese work places.

Like *do'omo*, まあまあ *ma'a ma'a* , is another versatile expression.

Its first meaning in English is : not so bad, passable, so-so

Example

- *Kekka wa ma'a ma'a desu.*
The outcome is not so bad.
- *Ureyuki ha ma'a ma'a desu.*
Sales are just so-so.
- “ *Keiki ha dodesu?* “ “ *Ma'a ma'a desu.*”
“ How's business?” “ Well, not so bad.”



The second meaning is: well, well; come,come; now, now ; please

Example

- *Ma'a ma'a ochituki nasai.*
Come now. Just calm down.
- * *Ma'a ma'a yoku irasshai mashita.*
Well, well I'm glad you've come. .



The third meaning is: oh my!; dear me!

Example

- *Ma'a ma'a,. sukkari nurechatte!*
Oh dear! You are drenched.

Perhaps *ma'a ma'a* in the meaning of “ not so bad, passable or so so” is most useful for you. All you have to say is “*Ma'a ma'a desu* “, when you do not want to be specific about something.

Edamame – Table Soybeans

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It's summer. It's very warm. It's time for beer and *edamame*.

Before the advanced technology of food freezing, you could enjoy *edamame* only in the summer. You would drop in a beer hall with your buddies for one pitcher or two of icy cold beer on your way home from the office just to enjoy the beginning of your freedom from work. And *edamame* is indispensable, a must, with icy cold beer.

But these days, many Japanese restaurants in this City serve you *edamame* for free if you order beer or sake all through the year. A benefit of the modern technology of food freezing. That's great. But often the *edamame* they serve is far from the *edamame* you enjoy in the beer halls in Japan.

In my opinion, the two things most important about *edamame* are:

One: They must be served “*al dente*” just like pasta.

Two: The right amount of salt must be used when they are boiled.

Otherwise, their natural sweet flavor will be ruined.

The joy of eating *edamame* comes from popping *mame-al dente* into your mouth by squeezing them out with your finger tips from pods that are naturally green. Please stay away soft salty *edamame* in soggy sorry looking yellowish pods !

Edamame is a must with icy cold beer on hot summer days and you can buy frozen *edamame* at oriental grocery stores. But, buy ones in pods. Follow the cooking instructions printed on the container- plastic bag. Do not overcook *edamame*. Remember they must be *al dente*. You can also buy frozen shelled *edamame*. They are also good in salads.

