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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,
Pulisher: 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

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, Aramasu, Shirataki and Sawanoi.
Common Expressions in the Work Place (Part Two)

In the last issue we showed you how to use どーも do’omo, one of the expressions you often hear at the Japanese work places.

Like do’omo, まーまー 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**

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 indispensible, 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.