

Chiisai Shinbun 2025-1Q

This is a quarterly newsletter of the **Japan-America Society of Vermont** describing what we have accomplished during **the 1st quarter of the year of 2025** (January, February and March) and a forecast of our activities in the near future.

1. Nengajo (New Year Card) Competition in New England Region by Consulate General of Japan in Boston

Every year the Consulate General of Japan in Boston holds a Nengajo (New Year Card) competition for children from K (kinder garden) to 12 (high school) in the New England region. This year, like the past year, Toshi was one of the judges

. This program has been run by **Zoe-san**, who was from JASV. (**She also attended this new year potluck party. Many of you must have a chance to talk to her.**)

Following are this year's winners reported by Zoe-san.



Elementary School



Middle School



High School

Toshi wished to have an adult group competition too. He would certainly challenge for it.

2. Donation from HK Holbein, INC

On Jan 17th the JASV received a \$750 donation check from Mr. Tim Hopper of HK Holbein, Inc. Thank you very much, Tim!!! At the end of December last year Toshi had translated a business letter for him. For your

information, Tim also donated manga Supplies (utensils and paper) to Manga club when we participated in the Vermont International Festival in 2019. (http://www.jasv.org/newsletter/Chiisai_Shimbun_19Winter.pdf). Unfortunately there is no Vermont International Festival as of today.

Also he used to be one of our Japanese language students.

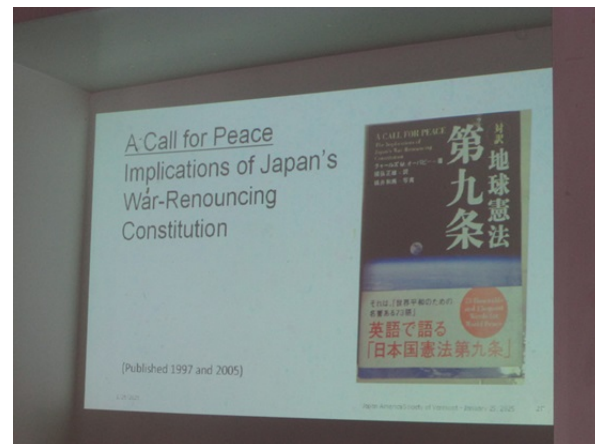
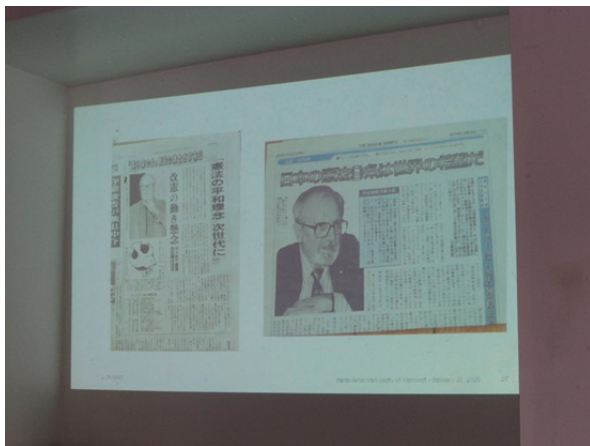
3. New Year Potluck Party

We had a New Year Potluck Party on Saturday, Jan 25 at the usual Clubhouse in South Burlington. Thank you very much for the delicious food everyone brought!!!

Presentation by Ms. Solveig Overby

Burlington resident Ms Solveig Overby presented a talk about her late father, Emeritus Ohio University Professor Charles Overby, who had dedicated his later life to promoting world peace. Professor Overby started the Article 9 Society, USA, in 1991, with a mission to educate the world about Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, its “peace” article. Solveig told the story of how her father, a poor boy from rural Montana and a Korean War Air Force veteran, came to be an engineering professor and peace activist. The story noted that Professor Overby promoted resource conservation, recycling, and re-manufacturing before it was fashionable, and advocated that Article 9-like language should be added to the constitutions of other countries in the world. He believed taking these actions would be a way to prevent wars which are often fought over resources. Solveig noted that her father’s efforts influenced Japanese citizens to start their own Japan-based Article 9 organizations for promoting peace and Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution. A discussion followed the presentation, about the current pressures and political decisions regarding Article 9 that are happening in Japan today.

She brought so many books her father owned and offered us to take them home. About one box full of books out of three boxes was gone after the party. Thank you very much, Solveig!!!



It was a very intellectual presentation. We are so sad to see that the current world is going an opposite direction from Dr. Overby's.

Enjoyed Food Participants Brought

Thank you very much everyone for the delicious food and deserts!!! Everyone enjoyed and Toshi later received a comment from some people, "one hour assigned time wasn't long enough!!!"



Commendation Delivery

JASV presented a commendation to the following two persons, **Suzuki Carlson-sensei** who recently received "**AATJ Teacher award**"(American Association of Teachers of Japanese). JASV congratulated her award and thanked her for what she has contributed to the JASV, and we also thanked **Ms. Brigitte Gagnon** for her wonderful presentation of Momotaro kamishibai at this party and Matsuri. We also had planned to present a commendation to our **Web-master Steve Gorman**, but he was so busy with his own company and couldn't attend the party. We will do this at the next event in spring for him.

- Suzuki-Sensei (UVM Japanese Teacher)

As everyone knows Suzuki-sensei was recently awarded the highest honor "**AATJ Teacher Award**" in her field. We congratulated her and also thanked for her contribution to the JASV with presenting a JASV commendation and a piece of pottery as a present.

She gave us a speech, in short, "I would like to thank all who are impacting the lives of so many through your volunteer service for the Japan-American Society of Vermont. I also want to thank Mr. Saitoh, our JASV president, for his hard work and dedication to promote Japan studies in Vermont. I hope that JASV will continue to grow and contribute to strengthen the US-Japan relations! Thank you so much for the commendation." Thank you very much, Suzuki-sensei.



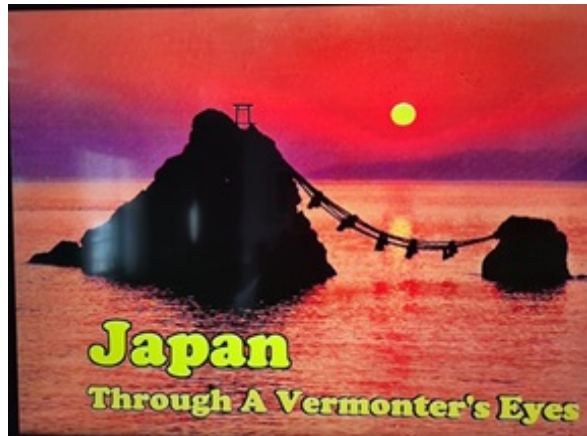
- Ms Brigitte Gagnon (UVM Student)

Brigitte is a senior of UVM. She learned Japanese language from Suzuki-sensei. (Suzuki-sensei commented that she was the best student.) Brigitte presented a Kamishibai (story: Momotaro) to us. She also did it at Matsuri, but the display had a problem. This time her presentation went very well. Thank you, Brigitte!!! She also received a commendation and a vase.

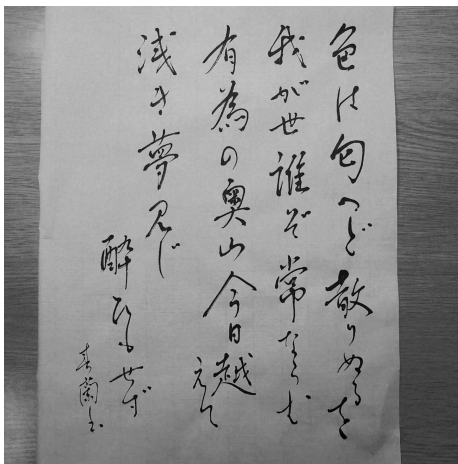


Presentation by Mr. Don Ballas

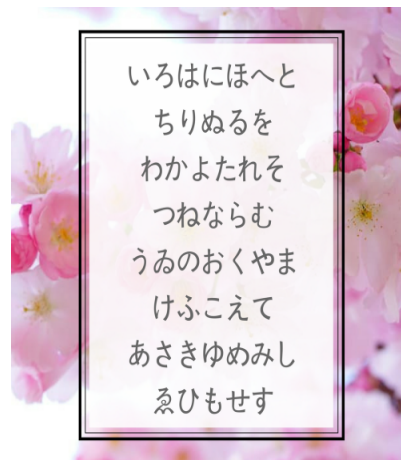
Mr. Ballas is an IBM retiree who had an assignment at IBM Headquarter in Tokyo. He made a wonderful presentation showing many interesting photos, basically of Tokyo, through his eyes.



Particularly one of the photos was an **Iroha-poem**(song), which is very important to learn about Japanese language and culture.



((Iroha (いろは) poem))



(Written in Hiragana--Japanese syllables)

The Iroha (いろは) **poem contains each character of the Japanese syllables exactly once** (above right picture) and it means a poem meaning a sincere Japanese spirit (translated below by Toshi).

いろはにほへと (色は匂へど) (Color of flowers smells nice,)
ちりぬるを (散りぬるを) (But they will fall apart shortly)

わがよたれぞ（我が世誰ぞ）（No one in the world）
つねならん（常ならん）（Is unchanged）
ういのおくやま（有為の奥山）（The deep mountain of karma,
けふこえて（今日越えて）（We crossed it today）
あさきゆめみし（浅き夢見じ）（I dreamed deeply）
えひもせず（酔ひもせず）（Even not being drunk）

(precisely speaking, there were two different "い" and two "え", but there is only one for both in modern language. Above right picture!)

Can anyone challenge to make a poem using English alphabet once?

Book Donation

Ms Overby and Mr. Soga donated her father's books and his family books to us. About one to two third of the books were taken. It is nice to see to see those books got the second owners. We will continue to give away the rest of the books whenever we have a chance in the future. Thank you very much, Ms Overby and Mr. Soga! (We used to have a library, but not anymore. We started to present such donated books to our event participants.)



Looking for Friends or a Babysitter

Katie Garneau, her husband Ray and their son Hugo who live in Vergennes, VT, attended the party for the first time. Ray is a Japanese descendant and they want to raise their son bilingually (English and Japanese). They are looking for friends or a babysitter who speaks fluent

Japanese. If you are interested in please contact Katie (katiekentuckychambers@gmail.com)



There are many families who have the same goal. It isn't easy for anyone to become bilingual. If you have some suggestions, please advise them.

4. Next Gathering

Last year we had the Spring Potluck party on Saturday, May 4th. This year we are going to have it on **Saturday May 3rd**. Detailed schedule will be let you know when the date comes closer. As of today, two events are planned.

- Performance by a few Taiko Club members of UVM. We will be able to learn how to play.
- Presentation by Ms. Kelly Underwood. She is a JASV member and is working at BETA Technology as an engineer. We will know our new future transport business, her company's vision.

Thank you! JASV