

Chiisai Shinbun 2026-1Q

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 2026** (January, February and March) and a forecast of our activities in the near future.

1. Happy New year

Japan America Society of Vermont wishes you a happy new year!!! This year is the year of horse, which symbolizes energy, speed, power and growth with cultural significance.



(Painting in Asakusadera, Tokyo)

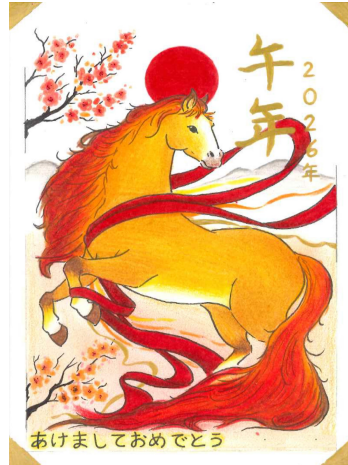
2. Nengajoh (New Year Card) Contest

The Consulate General of Japan in Boston held the annual Nengajoh Contest for the New England region. Toshi was one of the judges and this event was coordinated by Ms. Zoe Nugent of the consulate general, who used to help JASV as a board member.

This year we had so many unprecedentedly beautiful Nengajoh particularly in high school group and we had a hard time to choose whose is the best, second, third, - -. And therefore this year five best ones were nominated for high school category.



(1st)



(2nd)



(3rd)



(4th)



(5th)

3. New Year Potluck Party

We had a New Year Potluck party on **Saturday, Jan 24th 2026**. It was a wonderful party. We celebrate the happy New Year and had a fun together. Although it was a beautiful day, but it was a very cold day. Toshi received several e-mail indicating that it is hard to drive this cold weather particularly at night. Even though such a harsh day, we had many people's attendance. Thank you very much!!!

3-1. Igo (Game of Go) Rule Presentation by Mr. Jack Cary of Vermont Go Club.

Igo is a very popular game in Japan together with Shogi (Japanese Chess.) Two players will compete the size of their territory gained each other on a board and they fight technically at each other's border. One mistake affect the consequence. Usually it will take more than one hour for one game.



(At Matsuri 2024)

Jack presented about the game principle for 20 minutes by slide projector. In general it isn't easy to fully understand it within such a short time.



(Jack's presentation by a slide projector)

After his presentation about rule of Go he worked for a hands on training. He brought smaller Igo boards so that it wouldn't take so much time for one game. Some of us enjoyed it. Thank you very much, Jack.



(Kelly and others challenged Jack!!!)

3- 2. Enjoyment with Food Everyone Brought and Communication

Then we enjoyed the food everyone brought. Thank you everyone!!!

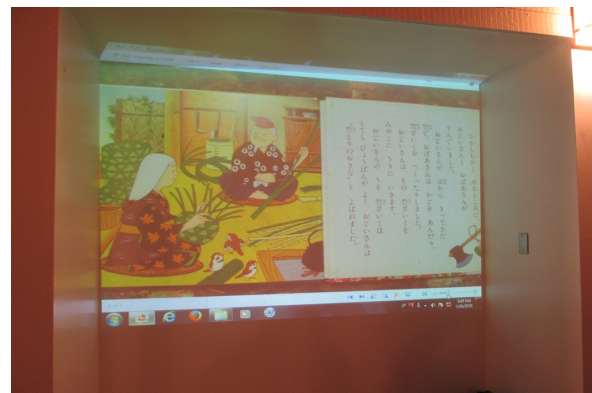


3-3. Kamishibai (more like Story Telling)

Toshi presented and interpreted "Kaguyahime" children's book written by Shogo Hirata and published by Hirata Fantasy Company. He wanted to translate the story from Japanese to English together with Japanese learner. He had invited Japanese Class students, but unfortunately no one could make it. The story tells,

"There lived an aged man and an aged woman together. They didn't have a child. One day the man who was bamboo cutter found a beautiful baby girl in a bamboo stalk. The girl grew up to be very beautiful - -."

This book is very interesting. And Toshi came across a strange sentence to him about how Kaguyahime was named. The book was telling that it is because the girl grew up Kaguwashi, meaning smell wonderful. If so, her name should be Kaguwashiki Hime. Hime means princess. Toshi thinks that "Kagu" means furniture or craft and "ya" means a maker, and therefore a Princess of craft maker. What do you think? The story came from Taketory Monogatari, which is translated as Story of Bamboo Cutter.



(Toshi Presents Kaguyahime story)

3-4. Karaoke

We had planned to do "Karaoke". Since no one wanted to sing, Toshi tried to show pictures of Kiev, hoping that the war will end as soon as possible. Toshi tried to present Kiev pictures he took on the way from Belarus when he visited his friends. Kiev was a very beautiful city. Unfortunately the presentation materials was screwed up when the projector was connected and he will try again to do at the next chance.

Nuclear Power Plant Chernobyl is located near Kiev. **Nataliya Gudziy** was borne and grew up 2 miles away from Chernobyl. She was 6 years old when the power plant exploded. Her town was buried and everything was under soil and it became a dead town because of radiation. She moved to Japan and is living as a singer. She says "**Human being will repeat same mistakes by forgetting**". She sings "**Spirited Away**." We listened this song together!!!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4Kijkkz4f0&list=RDGMEMCMFH2exzjBeE_zAHHJOdxg&index=7

She speaks excellent Japanese. She is currently having a successful life as a singer in Japan.

3-5. Oleg Yadrov Sang with His Guitar

Oleg sang the following music with his guitar. He has a wonderful talent and will sing at the next Matsuri also on stage. Thank you Oleg!!!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZuIMcmNZnU>



4. Next Event

4-1. Self Storage Cleanup

In later April when weather gets warmer we will continue down sizing of our belongings in our storage. Major items to get rid of are book shelves, Mikoshi, copy machine, etc.

4-2. Moving to a Smaller Unit

Then we will move from our current storage unit to a smaller one. Currently we are paying \$1,860 per a year, but are going to reduce it to \$780, resulting \$1,080 saving a year. We are aiming for sustainable society after we moved from Saint Michael College !!!

4-3. Spring Potluck Party

We will have a Spring Potluck Party on Saturday, May 9th. Detailed schedule will be informed when the date gets closer. We will do more Kamishibai, Karaoke, about Keiv, Puchinko-Machine, etc, to have fun. Please attend it!!!

[For your information!]

- May 5th is a Children's Day in Japan nowadays. It used to be a boy's day and March 3rd was a girl's day.

When Toshi was very young, May 5th was celebrated at home with his doll (Michizane Sugawara) presented to him when he was born.



(Toshi's doll)

For girl's day, March 3rd, girls are celebrated at home with their dolls (called Hina-Ningyo set).



(Toshi's niece's doll set)