

FEBRUARY, 2015: BREEZE ISSUE #88

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A Free E-Newsletter for Friends of Japan & Teachers of Japanese

GREETING FROM THE DIRECTOR



*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
The Daffodils by William Wordsworth*

Wandering through Tokyo in February, either in the town or in its suburbs, it happens often that I suddenly notice the fragrance of *Ume* (Japanese apricot) flowers, and am lead to a tree in bloom, standing there modestly.

In Japan, according to the traditional farmer's almanac, the year is divided into 24 equal periods (二十四節気 *Nijushisekki*), each reflecting a natural phenomenon, and synchronized with seasonal change. February marks two periods named 立春 *Risshun* (Beginning of spring) and 雨水 *Usui* (Rain water that melts the snow) that will be followed by the Splendour in The Grass.

Although it is still very cold in many parts of the United States, especially the upper midwest and northeast, and the snow still remains in certain areas of the San Gabriel Mountains, the weather is very mild here in Los Angeles and we continue to organize events that share the beauty of Japanese culture.

Last month, we started our winter term of Japanese language courses and also had a special lecture featuring Marty Friedman, legendary Rock 'n' Roll guitarist and multi-talented ambassador of Japanese culture and language. This month, along with our usual Japanema screenings and Japanese language [Privacy - Terms](#)

courses, we will be hosting a photography exhibition of young talented artists inspired by Mikiko Hara. Our headquarters also just released the results for the December JLPT so test takers nationwide can see the fruits of their hard work. Lastly, we advise all teachers interested in applying for our JET Memorial Invitation to check the deadline of the NJE test.

We hope our *Breeze* will continue to bring the fresh scents of spring flowers into your life.

Naomi Takasu, Director



PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION
AFTER MIKIKO HARA: FLOATING IN THE MOMENT
FEBRUARY 6TH – MARCH 6TH, 2015 (JFLA AUDITORIUM)
OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 7PM-9PM
FREE ADMISSION

Photography students from College of the Canyons and Pierce College participated in a master class lead by photographer Mikiko Hara at the Getty Center last fall. This exhibition showcases the fruits of those students' hard work, which were inspired by Mikiko Hara.

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JAPANEMA: FREE JAPANESE CINEMA SCREENING
THE PATHOS OF WHITE-COLLAR LIFE AS SOCIETY UNDERGOES TRANSFORMATION
EARLY SPRING (145MINS, 1956)
DIRECTED BY YASUJIRO OZU
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 @ 7PM (JFLA AUDITORIUM)

In his first film after the commercial and critical success of Tokyo Story, Ozu examines life in postwar Japan through the eyes of a young salaryman, Shoji (Ryo Ikebe), dissatisfied with career and marriage, who begins an affair with a flirtatious co-worker, Chiyo (Keiko Kishi).



**JAPANEMA: FREE JAPANESE CINEMA SCREENING
JAPAN'S OFFICIAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM SUBMISSION FOR THE 87TH ACADEMY
AWARDS**

THE LIGHT SHINES ONLY THERE (120MINS, 2014)

DIRECTED BY MIPO O

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25 @ 7PM (JFLA AUDITORIUM)

Depressed after an incident, Tatsuo (Go Ayano) has given up working and is idling his life away. One day at a Pachinko parlor, he gets to know a coarse but friendly young man, Takuji (Masaki Suda), when he gives him a disposable lighter. Tatsuo accepts Takuji's invitation and follows him home, which turns out to be a rundown, isolated house. It is here that Tatsuo meets Takuji's older sister, Chinatsu (Chizuru Ikewaki). They feel a quick mutual attraction and become close, but Chinatsu's life is difficult as she struggles to support her family. Even so, Tatsuo remains steadfast in his love for Chinatsu, and his unwavering feelings begin to sway her. Since finding a connection with Chinatsu, Tatsuo's reality quietly begins to regain its color and he rediscovers his ambitions in the world which he had almost lost. But there will be more tests to come...



**THE CONSULATE-GENERAL OF JAPAN IN LOS ANGELES PRESENTS
CUTE CHARACTER BENTO CONTEST 2015**

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 22, 2015

The Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles would like to celebrate the inscription of Washoku (Traditional Dietary Cultures of the Japanese – notably for the celebration of New Year-) to UNESCO's List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2013 and to enjoy Japan's cute and cool food culture with you. As Japanese cute bento creation is already becoming popular in the U.S. , we would like to cherish Japan's cute and cool food culture by having a bento contest. We are looking for photos of cute and creative character bento decorated in a food container. Among the posted photo entries, 10 winners will be chosen by the Consulate and BentoUSA, from the following categories: 3 bread-based bento, 3 rice-based, 2 pasta-based and 2 bento that do not fall under the other categories. The winners will be awarded with prizes!



MIWA YANAGI
ZERO HOUR: TOKYO ROSE'S LAST TAPE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2015 TO SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2015
@ REDCAT (BUY TICKETS!)

Stranded in Japan during WWII, a young Japanese-American woman was forced to serve as a radio broadcaster for a propaganda program controlled by the Japanese Imperial Army, and was subsequently tried for treason. Seventy years later, this historic incident is brought to life through a visually stunning whodunit, conceived, written and directed by internationally renowned visual artist Miwa Yanagi. Brimming with iconic imagery from her rich body of photographic work, Zero Hour tells the multi-layered story of a woman caught between two nations during the war. This presentation marks Yanagi's North American debut as a theater artist.

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NJE DEADLINE COMING UP!
2015 JET MEMORIAL INVITATION PROGRAM
JOIN US FOR A TRIP TO TOHOKU NEXT SUMMER

This is a reminder that the 2015 National Japanese Exam deadline is on February 17th, 2015. All teachers interested in applying for 2015 JET-MIP must register their student candidate for this test in order to be eligible. We have also included a new video slideshow of the 2014 program on our website so make sure to have your students watch the video to get a better understanding of the purpose of this program. Please contact us if you have any questions and we look forward to receiving your application.



FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 JAPANESE LANGUAGE GRANTS

We are pleased to announce the start of our Fiscal Year 2015-2016 grant programs that we organize annually in support of Japanese-Language Education in the United States. These include the following:

1. Japanese Language Learners Event Grant previously known as "Speech Contest Grant" (Deadlines: 3/1/2015 & 9/1/2015)
2. Japanese Teaching Material Purchase Grant (Deadlines: 3/15/2015 & 9/15/2015)
3. Salary Assistance Grant for Japanese Language Courses (Deadline: 4/10/2015)
4. Japanese-Language Education Project Grant (Deadline: 2 months prior to project start date)

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AJALT WORKSHOP ON HOW TO TEACH JAPANESE PHONETICS SATURDAY, MARCH 7 @ 9:30AM (JFLA AUDITORIUM)

This workshop will offer effective ways for Japanese language instructors to teach Japanese phonetics. Researchers have made significant advances in developing effective methods of teaching Japanese phonetics, and new, online learning tools are also available. The workshop will teach about these new methods and tools and help instructors achieve the results they want to see in their classrooms by engaging their students in phonetics early on in their language education.

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2014 DECEMBER JLPT ONLINE RESULTS NOW AVAILABLE!

Online results for those who took the JLPT in December of 2014 at any of the 15 test sites in the United States are now available online. You will need your registration number, included on your voucher, and the eight-digit numerical password you provided during the registration process. If you do not have this, you can login to your JLPT Online Account to retrieve the information. The results will be available until Monday, March 30, 2015 (US Time). Hard copies of your results and a certificate if you pass will be sent out by the beginning of March. The next test in the United States will on December 6, 2015, and additional information will be available on the AATJ website in June/July.

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REPORT: THE KAKEHASHI PROJECT: COMMUNITY ADVOCACY BY YOUNG ADULTS

Six young leaders from Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, Wakayama, Aichi, and Oita prefectures participated in the Kakehashi (Bridge for Tomorrow) Project as part of a Youth Exchange Program with North America promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and implemented by The Japan Foundation. The main objective of The Kakehashi Project - Community Advocacy by Young Adults - is to promote deeper mutual understanding between Japan and the United States, to enable leaders to connect to people in the US, and to help a younger generation develop wider perspectives on a range of issues. Additionally, the project aims to enable future leaders of Japan-US exchanges to form networks, and help young people to become global citizens and to encourage active roles at the global level in the future.

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JAPANESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION UPDATE #15: NOT-TO-BE-MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

At any given time, there are plenty of opportunities for students and teachers of the Japanese language. This month, three deadlines for amazing programs are fast approaching. The [National Japanese Exam](#) registration period closes on **February 17**.

The American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) developed this exam for middle school, high school, and college students to test their Japanese level using a proficiency-based model. That means that students will definitely not know every single thing on the test – *and that's okay!* It's a chance for students to take a nation-wide test without the usual feelings of pressure and fear of failure. Results are shared only with the teacher so that teachers can see their students' weak points and award their strengths with certificates.

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2014 JET MEMORIAL INVITATION PROGRAM: PARTICIPANT ESSAYS PART 6/8

In July of 2014, 32 US high school students participated in the JET Memorial Invitational Program (JET-MIP). They travelled to Japan for a two week study tour of the Tohoku region, focusing on the cities of Rikuzentakata and Ishinomaki (Due to Super Typhoon Neoguri, the trip to Rikuzentakata was cancelled). These were the cities that Montgomery Dickson and Taylor Anderson were assigned during their tenure as JET Assistant Language Teachers. Sadly, they lost their lives during the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in March, 2011 and JET-MIP was created to commemorate their work. Participants took part in exchanges with local elementary and high school students as well as local community groups with the purpose of fostering friendship and goodwill between both countries. Each month, we will feature four essays written by the participants describing their experiences in Japan. Click below to read about their unforgettable journey.

[Sadezia Pitt-Ulcena](#)
[Kinsley Prendergast](#)
[Jalyn Radziminiski-Smith](#)
[Samuel Russell](#)



J-LEAP REPORTS PART 5/5

For the 2014-2015 school year, we invited nine assistant teachers (AT) to various schools around the country as part of the Japanese Language Education Assistant Program (J-LEAP). This is the fourth year of this program where schools around the country are given the opportunity to invite an AT for up to two years to aid in strengthening their Japanese language program. This month, we will feature the reports from the following ATs detailing their experiences at American schools.

[Miho Kobayashi, Verdugo Woodlands Elementary School \(Glendale, CA\)](#)

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Past Issues (2018)



Past Issues (2017)



Past Issues (2016)



Past Issues (2015)



Breeze #98



Breeze #97



Breeze #96



Breeze #95



Breeze #94



Breeze #93



Breeze #92



Breeze #91



Breeze #90



Breeze #89



Breeze #88



Breeze #87



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Breeze Issues #1-#36 (PDF)

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