

DECEMBER, 2015: BREEZE ISSUE #98

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

GREETING FROM THE DIRECTOR



December is probably the busiest month of the year in Japan. Students will work hard for their term exams and teachers will be busy completing their students' report cards. Businesspersons will be staying late to finish their projects by the year's end. They all do this WHILE getting ready for the holiday season, by writing up quite a few Nenga-jos (new year greeting cards), visiting friends or clients for a year-end Aisatsu (greeting), and doing grocery shopping for Osechi-Ryori (New Year's feast). No wonder there is even an alternate phrase in Japanese for December, "Shiwasu", which literally means "even the masters run around."

This month, JFLA will abide by this tradition and run around to bring you a lot of opportunities to enjoy Japanese language and culture events. Our language team welcomes you to a conversation cafe and a workshop on Japanese New Year celebration. Join these casual events to see if you are up to taking our language courses during winter term, which will start in mid-January. We also welcome you to chill-out in our library where you can enjoy Japanese-style hand-brewed coffee and Japanese jazz music during our Java and Jazz event. I am currently sifting through our library's music archive to come up with the best mix to play for you.

The year-end is the best time to reflect upon what you have accomplished in the past 12 months. I truly enjoyed reading all the reports from the American high school students that we have sent to Japan through the JET Memorial Invitation Program, as well as from the Japanese language assistant teach

we have invited to teach at K-12 schools here in the US. From these testimonials, I hope you will also feel the powerful impact of cross-cultural experiences and the difference it can make on the lives of our youth, which is both motivating and encouraging during a time when some nations are debating the openness of their borders.

Sincerely,

Hideki Hara, Director



JAVA AND JAZZ @ LIBRARY LOUNGE THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3 (6-8PM)

Enjoy an evening in the JFLA Library with great books, Japanese coffee roasted and brewed Japanese pour-over style by DCR and Japanese Jazz handpicked by our very own director, Hideki Hara. Stop by anytime between 6-8pm and receive a free one-year membership to the JFLA Library!

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CASUAL CONVERSATION CAFE SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5 @ 1PM

Come join our casual conversation café! Stop by anytime! At this popular event, you'll enjoy conversation with native Japanese speakers while having Japanese tea & snacks! All levels are welcome!



2015 JLPT UPDATE
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6
TIME VARIES BY LOCATION

This year, we received a record number of applicants here in the US for the JLPT and we want to let you know that AATJ has sent out all test vouchers and vital information sheets during the middle of November so all registered test takers should have received it by now. If you have not received this yet, you can download the information from your account on the [JLPT registration site](#). Make sure to get a good night's sleep before the test and we wish you the best of luck.

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JAPANEMA: FREE JAPANESE CINEMA SCREENING
"TOKYO GODFATHERS" (92MINS, 2003)
DIRECTED BY SATOSHI KON
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9 @ 7PM (JFLA AUDITORIUM)
IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

From acclaimed director Satoshi Kon (*Perfect Blue*, *Millenium Actress*) and Japan's leading animation studio Mad House (*X*, *Vampire Hunter D*, *Ninja Scroll*) comes this visually and emotionally stunning tale of adventure, love and redemption. In Tokyo, three homeless people's lives are changed forever when they discover a baby girl at a garbage dump on Christmas Eve. As the New Year fast approaches, these three forgotten members of society band together to solve the mystery of the abandoned child and the fate of her parents. Along the way, encounters with seemingly unrelated events and people force them to confront their own haunted pasts, as they learn to face their future together.



JFLA LIBRARY ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to the upcoming holidays, we will be closed from Saturday, December 19th to Monday, January 4th. The library will reopen on Tuesday, January 5th.



WORKSHOP: CELEBRATE JAPANESE NEW YEAR'S DEADLINE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10 @ 7PM

お正月 (Oshogatsu: The New Year) is one of the most important holidays in Japan. Come celebrate with us in our traditional way! Draw New Year's greeting cards using calligraphy and play traditional New Year's games. Beginners and people who have no experience with Japanese are welcome!



DEADLINE EXTENDED FOR JF'S NATIONAL SURVEY ON JAPANESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION NEW DEADLINE: DECEMBER 21

One of the Japan Foundation's biggest projects is a global survey measuring the popularity of the Japanese language around the world. Every three years, we contact one representative at every school which teaches Japanese and we ask that person to fill out a 15 minute online survey about Japanese classes, enrollment, reasons why their students are studying Japanese, and the challenges they face.

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JF NIHONGO WINTER TERM WILL START ON JANUARY 16! REGISTER NOW!

Winter is nearly here, and the registration period for our JF Nihongo Winter Term has begun! We are now [accepting registrations](#) for our popular Japanese courses which will begin on January 16th. Listen to the voices of our students. They'll tell you the reasons why they are learning Japanese, how fun it is, and their favorite Japanese words.

[Watch Videos](#)



2016-2018 J-LEAP: NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS DEADLINE: TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2016

Are you interested in inviting a Japanese Assistant Teacher (AT) to your K-12 classroom for up to two consecutive school years? Do you want to give your students an opportunity to learn and hear Japanese from a native speaker or an additional native speakers for some variation? If so, make sure you apply for J-LEAP, which was started in 2011 with the help of the Laurasian Institute (TLI). Our goal is to nurture a new generation of highly qualified Japanese language teachers in the United States and we currently have a total of 19 ATs in 11 different states nationwide. There are ten new ATs this year and we will be featuring the reports from two ATs every month as they write about their experiences at American schools. We have also included a report by Leslie Okada Roberts of TLI about the arrival training and the importance of the program.

[Kasumi Tago, Edina High School \(Edina, MN\)](#)

[Tamaki Yoshitome, Apple Valley High School \(Apple Valley, MN\)](#)

[What is J-LEAP and What Des it Have to do With Me?](#)

[J-LEAP Application Information](#)



JAPANESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION UPDATE 25: JFLA ROCKED ACTFL 2015!

Every year, JFLA staff members attend the largest foreign language education convention in the US, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Convention and World Languages Expo. We go to support Japanese language teachers by distributing goods (posters, badges, stickers galore!), sponsoring sessions, collaborating with other organizations, and bringing together new leaders in the field.

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2015 JET MEMORIAL INVITATION PROGRAM: PARTICIPANT ESSAYS PART 4/8

In July of 2015, 32 US high school students participated in the final 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. 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, middle 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 memorable journey.

[Bridget Keeney](#)

[John Kim](#)

[Taylor-Anne Kim](#)

[Angela Li](#)

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Annual Report

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Web Design.