



*Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute*

# 日本文化センターニュース

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Japanese Cultural Center Newsletter

January/February 2009

## Toward the 20th Anniversary of MFWI

I am very happy to share this special occasion with you today to celebrate the New Year with New Year's food that has been prepared by our dedicated volunteers and staff. Thank you very much for your support. Without your help, we would not be able to create this kind of New Year's atmosphere.

How was the year 2008 for you? As a whole, I hope the year 2008 was fine for you and as you expected it to be. As for me, I was very lucky to be here in the US this past year, because I was a witness to a historical moment of world history—the election of Barack Obama as President of the United States. Many people have praised President Obama from various points of views, but to me the most interesting thing about President Obama is that he has had experiences while living abroad

I firmly believe that everyone can grow from experiences involving different perspectives. Therefore, immersing yourself in a different culture is more important now than before for future generations. President Obama was exposed himself to different cultures when living in Hawaii and in Indonesia. I am very happy that a person like President Obama became the nation's leader this year.

I believe 2009 is going to be a very tough year due to the financial crisis. I feel that we can not expect the American economy to get back on track soon, and we may not see an upward trajectory by the beginning of the year 2010, which is the 20th anniversary of MFWI.

Two people that have inspired me while I have been here at the JCC are Dr. Akira Irie and Senator Daniel Ken Inoue (whom I have not met). Dr. Akira Irie is a well-known historian of diplomatic history, especially United States and East Asian relations and international issues. In the late 1970's I attended his lecture which at that time he was a professor at Harvard University. I remember he emphasized the importance of promoting "a grass root movement exchange," among ordinary people, between the US and Japan. He encouraged providing ordinary Americans with opportunities to expose themselves to Japanese culture and to have more Americans who can understand the Japanese way of thinking and values. When the relationship between the USA and Japan takes downturn, these people can play an important role with more balanced opinions.



Chuck Rehberg, Spokane Sister Cities President; Fumihiko Mori, JCC Director; and Spokane Mayor Mary Verner.

The other person who has influenced me is Daniel Ken Inoue. He is an American politician who currently serves as the Senior United States Senator from Hawaii. When I watched a local program on TV last year, Senator Daniel Ken Inoue answered a question from the audience during his lecture at the Washington University. The question was, "What do you think about the future relationship between the USA and Japan, and also, the relationship between the USA and Europe?" As far as the relationship between the USA and Europe is concerned, there is something deep and in common with them—that is, their basic foundation in Christianity. Therefore, it would be easy for them to find a way to understand each other no matter how their relationship gets worse. On the contrary, the relationship between Japan and the USA has nothing to do with religion. There's no common foundation between the USA and Japan. Therefore, both Japan and the USA have to make utmost and constant efforts to establish an amicable relationship with each other and to make an effort to promote it further. Otherwise, the relationship will easily fall apart. So the relationship between the USA and Japan is fragile and unstable, and will continue to be so.

That was his concern. I will keep their remarks in mind, as my creed and as I work here at the Japanese Cultural Center. Your continued support and help will be greatly appreciated, even indispensable as we continue to develop the JCC. Thank you.

Fumihiko Mori, JCC Director



## Consider MFWI's Homestay Weekend Program!

Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute is looking for caring host families willing to open their heart and home to a pair of students **for just one weekend!** When you host students, your family gains the opportunity to learn about another culture while sharing your American values and traditions. Host families are open-minded, enjoy learning about other cultures, and appreciate the unique opportunity hosting offers their Family.

Share a typical weekend with students who are eager to learn what American life it is like in the United States. Not only is hosting MFWI students a rewarding experience, it may also mean that you have added two special new members to your family. Over 8,300 MFWI students have had a wonderful homestay experience in Spokane.

MFWI's homestay weekend program has been developed by educators who believe in the value of cultural exchange and active participation as a means of deepening students' understanding of American culture, values and diversity. It is also an excellent way for students to practice their English language skills.

There will be several homestay weekends to choose from this spring: **February 27-March 1, March 6-8, March 13-15 or March 20-22.** A pre-homestay orientation will be scheduled for families to meet their host students and discuss their weekend plans. If you miss this spring homestay, call for hosting in the summer or fall session.

Please contact MFWI for an application, orientation handbook or more information at (509) 232-2071, [homestay@mfw.org](mailto:homestay@mfw.org) or visit the website at: [www.mfw.org/homestay](http://www.mfw.org/homestay).

### Donations

Hide Tsutakawa gave items to be used in the Horaitei, Japanese Tea Room.

Hirohito Yokochi gave the generous donation of food that was used at the Oshogatsu, Japanese New Year Celebration at the Japanese Cultural Center.

Harold and Florence Young gave a doll.

Special thanks to:

Hiroko Clevenger, Ely Griffith, Peggy and George Heyamoto, Katsumi Hoki, Ayako Inotani, Noriko Masugata, Akiko Melton, Junko Mori, Geoff Ruzicki, Lindsay Sabino, Hide Tsutakawa and Nancy Tsutakawa for all their assistance.

### Arrival of Students

With 273 students now on campus we have an all time record high!

Everyone arrived the first week of February with classes starting on Monday, February 9, 2009.

**MUKOGAWA FORT WRIGHT INST.**  
**JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER**  
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### Japanese Proverbs

雨降って地固まる  
*Ame futte chi katamaru*  
Adversity builds character.

出る杭は打たれる。  
Deru kui wa utareru  
The nail that sticks out gets hammered down

M-F 10-5pm &  
2nd/4th Saturdays 10-noon & by appt  
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