



# LBJLS Bento Club News

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## LBJLS UPDATE

April to June in every year, this is the busiest period of time.

The first of all, I have to report that the credit test was held on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Our eight high school students took the test and passed. Marc Del Rosario, Joshua Estrada, Sequoyah Hawk, Jose San Juan and Paris Parker took J-1AB level, Ariana Mertz, Glenn Irish and Katharine Owens took J- 2AB. Congratulation to all of you.

Next event to come is the speech contest on June 13th. All participating students are practicing very hard and our instructors are coaching their pronunciation, accents, posture, voice and variety of items.

Now, I am pleased to announce that we have 2 new wonderful teachers; Shirakawa sensei (M-2 ,Rm3) and Teraguchi sensei (E-1 Rm1). When Shirakawa sensei was introduced in the last bento news, she was TA and a substitute. Now she is a teacher for M-2 class. She is already exercising her talents of good teaching and leadership among her students. Another new teacher is Teraguchi sensei who has been with us since  
*(Con't on Page 2-Update)*

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## Long Beach Japanese Language School's Two Longest Tenured Instructors to Retire

After over 40 years of giving their hearts and souls to the LBJLS, Kazuko Watanabe Sensei and Tazuko Inui Sensei have decided to retire from teaching.

The school will honor them after our graduation ceremony on the last day of school, June 20th at approximately noon. All of their past students and community are urged to come to give their regards and best wishes.

Officially they will be retiring after this year's Summer Session, the school felt that June 20th was the proper time to honor them. Both have agreed to provide the school their expertise on a part time consultation basis.



*Kazuko Watanabe and Tazuko Inui*

Watanabe Sensei is a native of Aichi Prefecture in Japan. She graduated from Kinjo Women's College in Nagoya with a major in Japanese Literature. Forty-six years ago, she followed her husband, the late Toshio Watanabe, to the United States and began a new life. While raising her two daughters, Momoyo and Kurumi, she also embarked on her long 42 year teaching career in Japanese language at the Long Beach Japanese Cultural Center- 21 years under the Kyodo System and 22 years since it became the Long Beach Japanese Language School.

Watanabe Sensei recalls that when she first came to the US, she "didn't know a single soul" and it was the Long Beach Japanese community and the parents of the Japanese Language school who were the "most welcoming". The students of LBJLS and her life experiences at our school continue to very dear to her.

Watanabe Sensei was a 20-year member of Teachers of Japanese in Southern California and trained at their major workshops and lectures. She was also Vice President of the LBJLS Support Club, and we thank her for helping to organize and run the club's major fundraisers for many years-the Rummage Sale, Spam-Zushi and Chirashi-Zushi Sales.

*(Con't on page 3-Watanabe & Inui)*

(Con't from page 1-Update)

January. All E-1 class students instantly became a big fan of hers from the very beginning.

She graduated from San Jose State University in Anthropology and M.A. in Cross-Cultural studies. She has 4 years experience as an elementary school teacher in Japan. She also has experiences in teaching Japanese to adults in the USA. She is currently a Canine Behavior Specialist who works closely with dog owners to help them understand dog behavior and psychology better. If anyone has questions about your dog's behaviors, please feel free to ask Teraguchi sensei. She might give you a good tip.

Ms. Nakagomi and Rev. Yokoyama are working with us as TA's and Substitute's since February. Ms. Nakagomi graduated from CSULB and took Asian studies and learned pedagogy\* of Japanese Language. Many of you already know who Rev. Yokoyama is, or you might have read his article in this issue.

Ms. Nakagomi and Rev. Yokoyama has been substitutes to Adult/High School L1 classes and Elementary division classes also. We feel like that we have known them for long time.



***L-R: Shirakawa sensei, Teraguchi sensei and Nakagomi sensei***



***Yokoyama sensei***

\*ped-a-go-gy" The method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept.

## ***DIRECTORS MESSAGE***

By: Jay Shaheen  
[ishaheen@lbjls.org](mailto:ishaheen@lbjls.org)

Time sure does go fast when you are having fun. And we are having fun here at the Long Beach Japanese Language School.

Last year we celebrated our 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for the school. That is quite an accomplishment and I would be remiss if I did not congratulate all of the school's leaders of the past and thank them for giving the current leadership a model to follow.

I also want to bring you attention to how important the teachers are and have been to our school's success.. While we have a fairly new cadre of teachers on staff, all of whom are dedicated to the students and the school, we have had the important luxury of having very long term teachers in our ranks.

Last year, Thomas Amiya retired from the school and he had been at this school for over 40 years. First, as a student, then as a TA upon graduation and then as a teacher.

This year we see two long tenured teachers and leaders of the school retiring. Kazuko Watanabe has been with the school for 42 years and was very active with the Support Club. Tazuko Inui has been with the school for 43 years and currently serves as the Academic Advisor for the school. But they are not leaving completely; while they are retiring from teaching both have offered their expertise to the school whenever we need them.

But the schools teachers are in the extremely skilled hands of our Lead Teacher, Mihoko Tanabe. She has been at the school for 20+ years and was "handpicked" and trained by Tazuko Inui to become the Lead Teacher many years ago. So we are doing well in that regard.

Our school continues to grow its student body, in part, because we are the only school that has 3 different levels for beginners. Of course we have Elementary Level 1 for the ages 5-7 and we have High School/Adult Level 1, but is different about our school is that we have Middle School Level 1 for the age group of 8-13. Every level has a different approach to the teaching of Japanese and Japanese Culture.

The future looks bright for the Long Beach Japanese Language School. But the future is dependent upon the help of everyone involved. Through volunteerism, raising funds and providing the future leadership.

If you shop at Vons, Ralphs, Lazy Acres or on Amazon you can help the school raise funds. Ask us how!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### **SPECIAL EVENT**

Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup> – Speech Contest and Pot Luck

### **SPECIAL EVENT**

Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> Graduation, Honor Retiring Teachers and Cleanup

### **SPECIAL EVENT**

Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> & Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup> –LBJCC Festival

### **SPECIAL EVENT**

Saturdays, July 11-August 22 – Summer Session

### **Special Event**

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>  
Orange International Street Fair

### ***A Parent's Perspective***

By: Terumi Kobayashi

My children, Midori (8 years old) and Akira (6 years old) started going to Long Beach Japanese Language School since last September. Currently Midori is in Elementary Level M1 and Akira is in Elementary Level 1 class. I am native Japanese from Japan, but didn't do a good job in terms of teaching my children Japanese, so I was excited when I found the school which focuses on teaching non-Japanese people. But I was a little worried about them for the first time whether they would start saying "I don't want to go to school on Saturdays!" after their regular weekdays at their local school.

But there was no need to worry – both children really enjoy going to the Japanese school every Saturday since there are more than just learning Japanese language as an academic course. They've been experiencing many hands-on cultural activities such as Origami and Ito-Denwa (paper phone with string) and events such as Setsubun (it's the day before the beginning of spring and they threw beans in the class!) and Hinamatsuri (it's a girl's day and they made prince and princess with paper).

I tend to forget to teach those activities to my children during those busy days and am very thankful to the school for giving them opportunities to learn.

But I believe the best thing about this school is people – Teachers, classmates, and the school staff. Their teachers, Teraguchi-sensei, Bernardson-sensei and all other teachers are very friendly and patient yet very skillful and both children love them and could stay in the class comfortably from the beginning which is a big point for me since both children are a little shy. Their classmates are also friendly and they are always looking forward to playing with them during the recess. And lastly, the hard-working amazing staff who manages the school from funding the school to preparing snacks to throwing events such as pancake day to ensure the school is running properly for students to be able to enjoy learning there. Very impressive and I am very grateful for their support.

I've heard that the summer class will be rather event-oriented course than regular semester course, so we are really looking forward to participating again.

*(Con't from Page 1-Watanabe & Inui)*

As an adult and high school language instructor, Watanabe Sensei strongly believes in continuous professional development, teaching collaboration and community involvement. She long served on our credit testing committee and supported the "forward-thinking" teaching methods curriculum changes led by Tazuko Inui Sensei. She believed in fulfilling the intellectual curiosity of our students, while building their competence in Japanese language and culture.

Watanabe Sensei, now lives in Los Angeles with family. Her hobbies are gardening and raising birds. She is also an avid reader and her extensive knowledge of Japanese history and cultures is and will continue to be an asset to our school. She says her hope is that LBJLS will prosper in the Nikkei community for many years to come, and she intends to support the school and community as long as possible.

Inui Sensei grew up in Kyoto, Japan where she attended Rakuohku High School and graduated from Doshisha Women's College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and English Literature. After teaching high school in Kyoto for 5 years, her English really came in handy when she met and married American Nikkei Lloyd Inui and settled down in the United States to raise their family and carry on their dual academic careers-he at Cal State University Long Beach and she as a Japanese Language teacher at Coastline Jr. College, Orange Coast College, the Kyodo Japanese Language System and the Long Beach Japanese Language School.

Throughout her teaching career, Inui Sensei was involved in a wide variety of academic endeavors including at Cal State Long Beach and Beach, UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz, UC Irvine, San Francisco State and Toronto University.

Inui Sensei has given academic distinction, hard work and dedication and needed continuity of the Long Beach Japanese Language School for 45 of our 66 years.

It is safe to say that without Inui Sensei's extensive teaching background, high academic standards, moral guidance and organizational leadership, Long Beach Japanese Language School may not have survived and thrived to this day. She inspired our school to grow and change as the world around was changing. In the early 1990's, she helped us establish our independence from the Kyodo System so we could develop a curriculum that met the new generational needs of our community. In the late 90's, she organized the popular Summer Language Intensive for High School students, that is still going strong today. Inui sensei has served as an esteemed Instructor, Curriculum Director and Academics Advisor of the Long Beach Japanese Language School.

Tazuko Inui Sensei has also been a wonderful mother and grandmother for her adult children, Margaret and Jeffrey, and the moral and intellectual partner to her husband Lloyd. She is also an expert seamstress, gardening enthusiast and a superb cook-without whom our Chirashi and Sushi sales would not be nearly as successful.

Please join us on June 20th.



**Nancy Kobata – President  
Japanese Language School  
Boosters Bento Club  
nankobata@gmail.com**

June Brings Opportunities to Support the LBJLS Family!

The mission of the Boosters Club is to help support the daily running of the school by providing teacher and student support towards improving the school and keeping tuition reasonable. Remember everyone is a “Booster.” Anyone who is part of the LBJLS, students, teachers, parents, both past and present are Boosters. We need your support.

A big thank you goes out to our adult student representative, Janice Dickenson and past representatives Wanda Higa and Susan Ruth. They have organized the class snack donations. Each month, a designated class has been donating snacks for break. Thank you for supporting this effort, which in turn supports the school. We are asking for parents to help in the kitchen with preparing the snacks. Please come by the kitchen any Saturday, so that we can continue with this tradition.

We just had our Mother’s Day pancake breakfast. A big “Arigato Gozaimasu!,” to everyone who supported this event! Thank you to those of you who donated items for the breakfast and craft boutique. The breakfast would not be a success without your support. 100% of all donations go toward support of the school.

As I write this, I am thinking about all the upcoming events! As always, the next events are upon us and June is a busy month for both students and busy with events which need your support!

Students are practicing for the speech contest which is on June 13th. Pizza is provided by the Boosters and we ask that students donate either a salad or dessert for this event.

Then graduation and school clean-up takes place on June 20th. Please stay for lunch, as the Boosters provide clean-up volunteers with hot dogs for lunch, after clean-up.

The Boosters will also be planning and getting ready for the Long Beach Japanese Cultural Center Festival on June 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. We are looking for your support for this important event. The Long Beach Japanese Language School is in charge of the soda and water booth during the upcoming LBJCC carnival. Please come by the kitchen during school hours to sign up to assist us.

We will have our next informational parent meeting on June 13, right after the conclusion of speeches. I look forward to seeing you then.

You can contact Nancy Kobata at [nankobata@gmail.com](mailto:nankobata@gmail.com), or phone 562-425-9537 (leave message) regarding your availability to help with any of the above events or with any questions you may have.

**Upcoming dates:**

- June 13 - Speech contest and potluck
- June 20 - Graduation & Clean-up Lunch
- June 27 & 28 - LBJCC Festival



**Long Beach Buddhist Church Minister  
Volunteers at the Long Beach Japanese  
Language School**

By: Rev. Yukinori Yokoyama

I came to Long Beach in May 2014 with my wife and son who are both Canadians to work for the Long Beach Buddhist Church as a Buddhist minister. I am now applying for a permanent residency in U.S.. Long Beach is so rich with diverse ethnic cultures and I am happy to see Japanese culture recognized with its historical value in the west part of Long Beach.

At college, I majored “intercultural communication” and study in this field motivated to me to work in a few different areas including paralegal translation and English education. I was also involved in an international exchange program called AFS for a few years. In this program, high school students were sent out to different countries where they experience different cultures and languages.

I truly respect the students who come to Long Beach Japanese Language school every Saturday to learn this foreign language and the cultural value embedded in this language. Acquiring a new language is sort of like opening our third eye we never knew we had and this new eye allows us to see this same world from an entirely different perspective and enriches our life profoundly. I am very happy to be part of their experience as a staff of Long Beach Japanese Language School.



By: Janis Dickenson  
[jansimiyeko@gmail.com](mailto:jansimiyeko@gmail.com)  
Adult/High School Student Representative

**SAYONARA, SUPPORT CLUB**

After 32 years, in April, 2015, the members of the Support Club bid “Sayonara,” and dissolved their role as the fund-raising entity for the Long Beach Japanese Language School. These dedicated members not only raised funds, but also volunteered numerous hours to support activities, such as the Summer Festival and International Food Fair in the City of Orange.

This is a partial list of these amazing individuals: Hisako Adkisson, Takako Agustsson, Masaye Akiyama, Thomas Amiya, Mitsuko Barbee, Masako Fukuhara, Fujiko Hama, Yoshiko Harada, Keiko Hirasawak Michiko Honda, Miyo Hora, Kenhji & Yukiko Kato, Ikuko Kobayashi, Flo Kojima, Junko Lee, Masumi Murakami, Tamie Niioka, Reiko Suzuki, Mihoko Tanabe, Naoko Urasaki, Kazuko Watanabe, Mitsue & Toshinari Yamanaka, Kimiko Yoshimura & Michiko Yoshimura.

They deserve our gratitude and respect for their amazing contributions to LBJLS – “Arigato Gozaimashita.”

What’s next? The Alumni & Friends of LBJLS has been formed as the fund-raising entity, and we are reaching out to interested persons to join this new group. Our first fund-raising activity is the Summer Festival in June, and we are calling all parents and adult students to get involved and volunteer.

Please contact Nancy Kobata at t [nankobata@gmail.com](mailto:nankobata@gmail.com) to let her know that you are ready to get involved with the Friends and Family of LBJLS.