

THE JAPANESE numbers from one to 10 were demonstrated by Mrs. Shellum for students, using the traditional Japanese brushes and ink. Mrs. Shellum told the students as she mixed her own ink for the lettering that in Japan, it is held that each person must individually mix their own ink to match their calligraphy.

Article from the *Shakopee Valley News* (1972). Japanese Woman Helps Youngsters Discover the Orient's Culture, February 1972.

Laura Reiko Shellum Koeck was an adored matriarch to her family. When Duane Rolf Shellum died in 1984, it was hard, but it helped that her five sons, Eric, Richard, Kirk, Alec, and George were around to help. In 2004, Laura married a second time to Eugene Leonard Koeck.

Laura died at age 86 on August 20, 2015. She was buried at the Fort Snelling Cemetery with her first husband, Duane Shellum.



SUMI-E is the Japanese word for Black Ink Painting. East Asian Painting and writing developed together in ancient China using the same materials —brush and ink on paper. Emphasis is placed on the beauty of each individual stroke of the brush.



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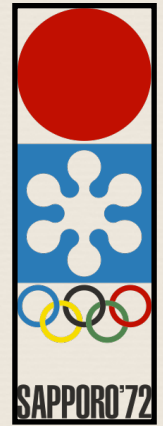
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Laura Reiko  
Shellum Koeck  
1928-2015  
In Shakopee 1972





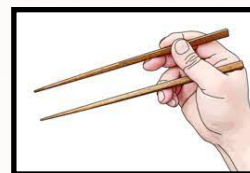
Fourth grade students from Pearson Elementary School in Shakopee had been interested in Japan after the 1972 Winter Olympic Games. The students learned about Japan for two weeks while they were watching the Olympic Games. Laura Reiko Shellum Koeck spent a day at Pearson, teaching the students and teachers about the culture of Japan.



She was a longtime volunteer at the Festival of Nations and founded the Minnihon Arts Center in 1973 to share her Japanese heritage with the people of Minnesota. She served as a Japanese cultural advisor to many schools, colleges, and museums, including the Pearson Elementary School in Shakopee.

Origami, eating with chopsticks, and Japanese calligraphy were some of the topics that Laura Reiko Shellum covered while at the fourth graders at Person Elementary School on February 7, 1972. According to an article in the **Shakopee Valley News** called Japanese Woman Helped Youngsters Discover the Orient's Culture in February 1972, Laura had taught traditional Japanese dance, creative movement, ballet, and Semi-e painting for her entire adult life. A teacher, Jane Keyes, invited Laura to the school.

The fourth graders had been learning about the 1972 Winter Olympics in held from February 3 to February 13, 1972, in Sapporo, Hokkaidō, Japan. It was the first Winter Olympic Games to take place outside Europe



and North America. Sapporo, Japan. The students wanted to learn about Japan, and so they were exciting when Laura showed up.

Laura helped the fourth graders from Pearson learn about origami, eating chopsticks, and learned about Japanese calligraphy. The students watched as Laura wrote the numbers from one to ten, using Japanese brushes and ink. She told them that she mixes her own ink, and that each person must individually mix their own ink to match their calligraphy. They ate some dried seaweed, which was a delicacy in Japan.



Laura Reiko was born in Tokyo, Japan in the year of the Dragon, on September 17, 1928. Her father was Keichi Ito Nakamura and her mother was Jeannine Facio Ito. Laura lived in Japan for a number of years before moving to America.

Laura survived World War II in Japan, and moved to Minnesota in 1952 with her husband, Duane Rolf Shellum, who was born in Madelia, Minnesota on January 6, 1930. His parents were Elmer Gerhard Shellum and Grace Parsons Shellum.

Laura lived her life through her passions, and became an accomplished dancer, linguist, traveler and teacher, according to the **Minnesota Star Tribune** on August 24, 2015.

