

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



## 通 信

The Tsūshin is a membership publication of the Japan America Society of Minnesota

September 2019 Vol. 28, No. 10

### Recap: Obon Festival 2019



Tetsuya Shimano at the JASM calligraphy booth

Thank you everyone | for another great Obon Festival! Thankfully, August 18th was a beautiful, sunny day. Approximately 8,000 people showed up to celebrate the culture of Japan.

At the main JASM booth, visitors could buy a variety of market items: masks, t-shirts, and beverages like *ramune* and green tea. This year fox masks were very popular among attendees and were spotted all around the festival. We also set up

booths for J-Quiz, calligraphy, *yo-yo tsuri*, and *kingyo sukui*. Attendees enjoyed trying on *kimono*; eating *takoyaki*; watching music performed by Taikollaborative, Harisen Daiko, Sakurakai, and more. There were martial arts showcases by several local dojos and fitness organizations, and dance performances by Thunder Wave, Sansei Yonsei Kai, and many others. The night ended with the lighting of lanterns that lit up the waters of the Japanese gardens in Como Park.

We would like to thank all of our volunteers who made this festival possible. We couldn't have done this without your help. Thank you again! Please join us next year for another chance to celebrate this radiant piece of Japanese culture.



JASM Executive Director Rio Saito with visitors from the Japan America Society of Iowa (JASI) at an Obon Festival booth

### Upcoming: Corporate Roundtable with Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.

JASM is hosting a corporate roundtable on October 3rd, featuring Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. Founded in 1929, Sawai has grown into one of the leading generics companies in Japan. Guided by its corporate philosophy, "Always Putting Patients First," Sawai markets more than 310 high-quality generic drugs with 760 strengths and reliably delivers them to patients throughout Japan. In 2017, Sawai acquired US-based Upsher-Smith Laboratories, LLC marking its first step in overseas expansion to become a globally recognized generic pharmaceutical company.



Kenzo Sawai, Chairman of the Board for Upsher-Smith Laboratories, LLC

Mr. Kenzo Sawai joined the family's business in 2001 where he has held several senior executive positions and continues to serve as Sawai's Senior

Managing Executive Officer. He is also a member of Sawai's Board of Directors.

As Chairman of the Board for Upsher-Smith, Mr. Kenzo Sawai is the most senior Sawai executive serving at the Company's Minnesota headquarters. He works with Upsher-Smith President & CEO Rusty Field to lead strategy and decision-making for the U.S. pharmaceutical company and is instrumental in working to generate and leverage synergies between the two companies.

Within the Japanese generic pharmaceutical industry, Mr. Sawai currently serves as a permanent representative to the NHI (National Health Insurance) Pricing Committee of The Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Associations of Japan.

**Please RSVP to attend this event.** To do so scan the QR code to the right or visit our website at [mn-japan.org](http://mn-japan.org).



**Thursday, October 3, 2019**

7:30 a.m. Registration  
8:00 a.m. Program begins  
8:45 a.m. Q & A session  
9:00 a.m. Program ends

At Upsher-Smith Laboratories, LLC

6701 Evenstad Drive  
Maple Grove, MN 55369

**sawai**

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## Meet Our Board Member: Ron Leonhardt



*Ron Leonhardt,  
Board member*

In January, 1966 I was born to a German-Japanese father and Portuguese mother in Kobe, Japan. Both my parents lived through WWII in Japan as foreign residents. My older sister and I are considered second generation foreigners born and raised in Japan.

1966 was two years after the 1964 Tokyo Summer Olympics – the first Olympics in Asia. It symbolized Japan's postwar return to the international stage. Many argue it kickstarted Japan's economic rise over the next two decades. I owe a great part of my fortunate life riding this wave of Japan's successes through the 80s, 90s, and early 2000s.

After graduating from the American High School in Kobe, I attended Georgetown University. My original plan was to join the US State Department. But Japan was rapidly globalizing, and a lot of companies were looking for people who could thrive in both US and Japanese business environments, so I joined Fuji Bank in New York instead. I felt that I had already "made it" when they sat me down in an office on the 83<sup>rd</sup> floor of the World Trade Center. What I appreciated most about working for a Japanese company is that they take the time to train their young professionals with a broad, more holistic view of business. I learned a lot from great managers at Fuji Bank, many of whom lost their lives during 9/11. I have kept a special place in my heart for all of them over the years.

I have a wonderful family with a loving wife and two beautiful college-age sons. After three years with Fuji Bank I decided to get my graduate degree from Columbia University. There, I had the privilege of studying under legendary Japanese scholars such as Gerald Curtis, Hugh Patrick, and Donald Keene. But most importantly, it was where I met my Minnesotan wife, Molly. We both focused on East Asian business – me on Japan and Molly on China. The fact that a Midwestern girl spoke fluent Mandarin in the early 90s was the icing on the cake for me!

In 2000, Molly convinced me to move to Minnesota. I was nervous about how to maintain my connections to Japan. In Minnesota, joining JASM helped me fill that need. JASM allowed me to stay connected to my roots and to meet people with similar interests and passion for Japan. I became a member in 2000 and joined the board in 2015.

I have been on the planning committee for the Annual Mondale Scholarship Gala for several years and I support the annual J-Quiz program. I am a firm believer that language opens doors. The chance to show our young Harukaze musicians Momokusu Iwata and Ayatoshi Oikawa around Minneapolis reminded me of the amazing city we often take for granted. I also believe music brings people closer together. The opportunity to engage with both J-Quiz students and interact with young musicians from Japan is what I love best about JASM. For JASM to continue to be relevant we must embrace change and continue to spark interest for the next generation behind us.

Sadly, our sons don't speak Japanese (or Mandarin), but I know we have instilled in them the importance of having a global mindset. Bridging people across national boundaries matters, and JASM is an exemplary organization that does this so well.

-- Ron Leonhardt

## 2019 Mondale Scholarship Recipients

JASM is very pleased to announce the 2019-20 Mondale Scholarship Recipients. The Mondale Scholarship is given every year by JASM to support undergraduate students enrolled in Minnesota colleges, the University of North Dakota, or North Dakota State University, who are planning to study abroad in order to expand their knowledge of Japan. This award is named for Minnesota's own Walter Mondale, a former US Ambassador to Japan as well as former Vice President and Senator.

Below we have statements from the recipients of this year's awards. Congratulations to all of our winners!



My name is **Daphne Iskos** and I am a junior at Macalester College. I will be attending CET Osaka hosted at Osaka Gakuin Daigaku for my study abroad this spring. I am beyond excited to go abroad and experience Japanese culture firsthand with the support of the Mondale Scholarship.



My name is **Son Phan** and I am a junior at Macalester College. I will be attending CET in Osaka for my study abroad this spring. I look forward to studying in Japan and will work hard to make the most out of this rare opportunity afforded to me by CET, Macalester, and JASM.



My name is **Alison Meierhofer** and I am a junior at the College of Saint Benedict. I will be attending Bunkyo Gakuin University in Tokyo for my study abroad this fall semester. I am beyond excited to go to Japan and experience all that I can about the wonderful culture there.

*Continued on page 3*

## Membership News

### Thanks to the following new JASM members:

Br. Didacus Gottsacker, Daniel Rolf, Jessica Swanson, Elisha Tamura-Beattie, Sanae Tomita

### Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Miyuki & Mitch Baron, Charles Breer, Kevin Chiles, Lucy DeHaan, Michiko Dressen, Peter Gavin, Linda Hashimoto van Dooijeweert, Seikei Hibino, Reiko Imrie, Hitomi Isomura, Keiko Kawakami, Akiko & Scott Kilau, Kazue Kay Merritt, Steven Ray, Setsuko Rittmiller, Betty Tisel & Sarah Farley, Hiroshi & Eriko Wakato

### Thanks to the following renewing Corporate members:

Origami Restaurant, Saji-Ya Restaurant, Macalester College



## Consul-General Ito's Grassroot Caravan

The Consul-General of Japan in Chicago, Naoki Ito, visited Minnesota to lead a Grassroots Caravan to the cities of Winona and St. Michael over two days on July 29th and 30th.



On Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, Ralph Inforzato, Chief Executive Director of JETRO Chicago; Sarah Walbert of the Minnesota Trade Office; and JASM Executive Director Rio Saito visited Winona, Minnesota alongside many others as a part of the Grassroots Caravan led by the Consul-General, and met representatives from several Japanese companies.

First, the caravan visited Peerless Chain Company, a company that manufactures chains for tires, overhead lifting, cargo control, and more. Peerless Chain Company began in 1917 as a tire chain

Peerless Chain Company members with the manufacturer. In 2014, it became a completely owned subsidiary of KITO Corporation, a Japanese company that is the largest producer of chain and wire rope hoists worldwide. There, they met with Peerless President George Kosidowski as well as Masa Kokubo.

At noon, attendees met at Signatures Restaurant, where Sarah Walbert introduced Consul General Naoki Ito and Ralph Inforzato. This luncheon was followed by a roundtable, which began with a welcome by City of Winona Mayor Mark Peterson. Following this were short presentations by both the Consul-General and Ralph Inforzato. *Continued on page 4*

## Corporate Spotlight: Minneapolis Japanese School



The Minneapolis Japanese School is a nonprofit Saturday school located in Maplewood, Minnesota, serving pre-K through 12th grade students. It teaches language, art, and math in Japanese, as well as Japanese culture, to anyone interested. Its mission also includes teaching cross-cultural skills and helping children to adjust smoothly to age-appropriate classes if they return to Japan. Besides the classroom instruction based on the teaching guides established by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports, the school holds many fun events throughout the academic year (April-March) such as the Sports Festival, the New Year's Celebration, the Kanji Challenge, and the Summer Festival. Every year, the school participates in the Obon Festival in the Como Park.

## 2019 Mondale Scholarship Recipients, continued

*Continued from page 2*



My name is **Audrey Johannes**. I am a junior at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities studying political science with an emphasis on global politics. I will be attending Sophia University (上智大学) in Tokyo for the 2019-2020 academic year. Academic years are different in Japan than the United States, and are more similar to the U.S. calendar year, so I will be gone from September 2019 until August 2020.

I am extremely excited to have the opportunity to study Japanese foreign and domestic policy at such a renowned university, and am further excited to explore all of what Japan has to offer.

*Please thank our members with your support!*

### Corporate Benefactor Members

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Historic Costume Collection  
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UMN Dept. of Asian Languages and Literatures, Japanese Language Program  
University of North Dakota-Grand Forks  
Winona State University Global Studies Dept.



## Summer Festivals in Cambridge and Faribault

On Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, JASM Executive Director Rio Saito and two interns traveled to Cambridge, Minnesota to participate in the town's art fair. There they enjoyed meeting with locals and seeing the area. Visitors to the JASM booth displayed varying degrees of knowledge about Japan, with some knowing almost nothing and others having personal ties to the country. At the fair, JASM spread the word about our mission, as well as information on the then-upcoming Obon Festival.



*Visitors wearing the origami samurai helmets they made with JASM in Cambridge, MN*

One weekend later, on August 10<sup>th</sup>, the JASM office team went to Faribault, Minnesota. There, the Paradise Center for the Arts hosted the Blue Collar BBQ and Arts Fest. At the festival, there was music, food, and fun. Events included free artmaking, performances by the Enji & Pyrenees River Fire Dancers, improv comedy, a bean bag tournament, and a children's story time. Despite it being a windy day, there was a great turnout. At the JASM booth, attendees could purchase masks reminiscent of those sold at summer festivals in Japan, as well as authentic market items. JASM was invited to the festival by the city of Faribault's Mayor Voracek. Daikin Applied, a corporate member of JASM, is opening a new facility in the city that will create new jobs for the community.



*JASM Interns and a visitor wearing Japanese festival masks in Faribault, MN*



*The visits to the fairs in Cambridge and Faribault were made possible by the Japan Foundation's Center for Global Partnership.*

## Grassroots Caravan continued

*Continued from page 3*

Mayor Peterson then led a housing discussion, which was followed by remarks from Lucy McMartin, Winona Director of Economic Development. They discussed how the area's bluffs and river contribute to challenging geography, a housing study followed by Mayor Peterson's task force, how to assist with affordable housing, and how to take care of existing housing stock. Next, Corey Hancock and Randy Skarlupka of the Winona Chamber of Commerce led a workforce discussion consisting of healthcare and the pilot for the "REACH" program, which aims to teach soft skills related to manufacturing. The roundtable ended with a period for questions and answers.

After the roundtable, the group went to Winona State University to learn more about their Composite Engineering School (COMTEC)-- which is the only Bachelor's of Science program of its kind in the United States) -- and met Winona State University President Scott Olson.



*U.S. Water Service corporate office*

Near Winona State University is Lake Park. The caravan viewed the sakura trees at the park, which were donated by Winona's sister city, Misato, a Japanese town located in the Miyagi prefecture.

On Tuesday, July 30<sup>th</sup> everyone traveled to St. Michael, MN to visit the Kurita Water/U.S. Water Service's corporate office. Kurita Water has recently acquired U.S. Water Service. This is the second of its two most recent Minnesota acquisitions, the first being Fremont Industries in Shakopee. Present were Masahiko Mitsuta, Vice Chairman and LaMarr Barnes, President of U.S. Water Services; and Paul Spekman, President of Fremont Industries.

These trips to Winona and St. Michael were made possible by the Japan Foundation's Center for Global Partnership. Through outreach programs like these, it is possible to continue forming and expanding trade relationships throughout Minnesota and Japan, and thus broaden the understanding and appreciation between cultures.





## MN Grassroots Development: Red Wing-Ikata Sister City Commission

The City of Red Wing established its Sister City Commission through an ordinance adopted by the city council on October 26, 1992, for the purpose of “promoting the interests of the City of Red Wing and the United States by encouraging and fostering the development of sister city relationships of a long-term nature between this City and cities of other countries.” Its first official sister city relationship was established the following year with Quzhou, China.

Years earlier, however, interest in the Prairie Island nuclear power plant is what originally drew engineers from Japan to Red Wing as a similar plant was being built in Ikata. The sister city relationship with Ikata was formalized in August 1995.

Ikata is a town of 10,600 residents located in Nishiuwa District, Ehime Prefecture, Japan. The town spans the mountainous Sadamisaki Peninsula, the narrowest peninsula in Japan and the westernmost point on the island of Shikoku.



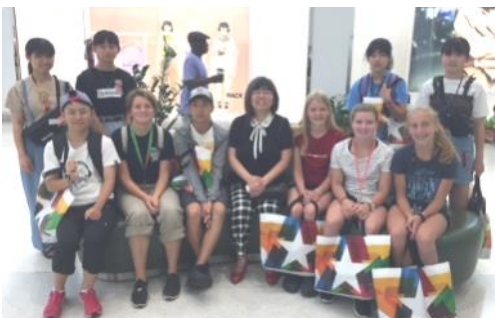
*Red Wing students and chaperone attend a taiko drumming performance in preparation for exchange visit to Ikata*

With Ikata, the most prominent program is the annual student exchange between the cities. Red Wing students travel to Japan, spend a few days sightseeing in several of the larger cities, and then proceed to Ikata to enjoy home stays. It is at the end of their school year and is festival time for Ikata. Almost immediately upon the

Red Wing students' return, a group of students from Ikata arrive in Red Wing just in time for our festival, River City Days. Here they participate in some typically American activities, visit the Mall of America (of course!), and take part in the River City Days parade by handing out Japanese candy along the parade route.

Notable but less frequent are visits each way by adult delegations. Twin monuments have been erected in each of our cities to commemorate the relationship, and this fall we are poised to renew pen pal correspondence between elementary school students.

*-Bill Foot, Chair of the Red Wing-Ikata Sister City Commission*



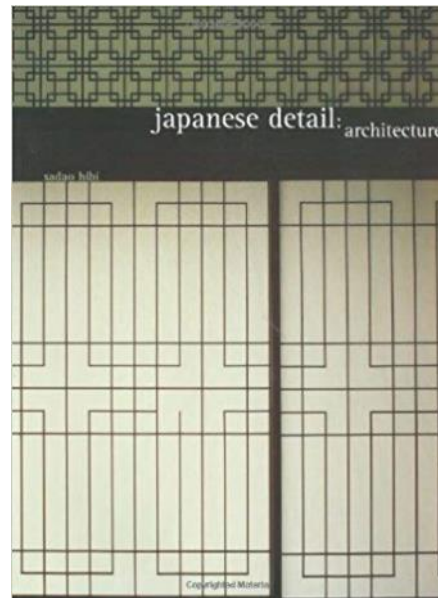
*JASM Executive Director Rio Saito also accompanied students from Red Wing and Ikata on a trip to the Mall of America.*

## Tom Haeg's Book Review

*Japanese Detail: Architecture*; Sadao Hibi, Chronicle Books; 1988, 142 pages.

Although written more than 30 years ago, *Japanese Detail: Architecture* is timeless in capturing the essence of traditional Japanese home building. I have seen more recently published books on the same subject but find them lacking and subordinate. *Detail: Architecture* is distinguished by its breadth and its inclusivity of several art disciplines spanning several centuries.

In Ayako Jindai's foreword we learn about the tension to achieve harmony (*wa*) between structure and nature in homebuilding. It covers all nuances, the roof, the *kaerumata* (carving enshrined on a beam), walls, latticework, windows, gates, *shoji*, alcoves, furniture, flagstone paths, curtains, washbasins, garden lanterns, walls and fences. Yup, it's all here, or it just doesn't exist.



The color pictures are overwhelming. There are more than 500 photographs. Unfortunately, it is shy on text to give the reader some accompanying description to explain what they see in each photo and share its cultural significance. For example, I would have liked to know how the *karado* (paneled door), *shoji* (sliding paper door) and *noren* (door curtain) are distinct from one another. While there are some oblique references in a two-page glossary, it is not enough and the reader begs for more verbal detail. Okay, to be fair, this is a survey book -- for a coffee table if you will -- not a textbook for Japanese Architecture 101. As such, it was still enlightening and stimulating.

What did I learn? More to the point, I was reminded of the stunning art found in simplicity, intricate handiwork, and respect for natural elements in construction to achieve balance. That the dichotomy between craft and art is opaque. That less is sometimes more. And here is the counter-intuitive conundrum: how to make the homeowner feel outside while inside. And inside while outside.

*-Tom Haeg*

## A Word from Yoko Breckenridge

Obon 2019 Review: MN Nihonjinkai would like to thank everyone who donated items for our Sekonhan Booth; thank the customers for supporting us with your purchases; and thank our volunteers who helped us in ANY way from sunrise to long after sunset!! We had a very successful day and enjoyed meeting so many new friends! It takes A LOT of



*Nihonjinkai at the Obon Festival*

hard work and cooperation, and we truly appreciate everyone's involvement. And now, we are ready to celebrate with our Annual Fall River Cruise!!

Proceeds from our fundraising events are used to offset the cost of this dinner cruise (\$40 per person) for Nihonjinkai members and other elderly Japanese, their family, and friends. Although priority will be given to members and Japanese elderly, everyone is invited to join us for this fun excursion.

We are trying a new venue this year: Stillwater Riverboat Cruises, located at 525 South Main Street, Stillwater, MN. The date is Sunday, October 13th, 3:30-6 p.m. Reduced cost includes dinner and a 2.5 hour tour! Your discounted prices will be as follows:

Nihonjinkai Members (you attended meetings or volunteered at our 2019 events) = \$5 each; Seniors (age 65+) = \$10; Children (age 3-11) = \$15; Others (age 12-64) = \$20.

If you know someone who might be interested, please give them the details! Register by calling, emailing, or texting Karen Harwerth: 612-747-0340 [kharwerth@comcast.net](mailto:kharwerth@comcast.net). Deadline is September 27th.

See you on the water! Thank you for your continued support. A thousand times, Arigato!



Photo by  
Ackerman + Gruber

**Yoko Breckenridge**  
**612-839-0008**



## Normandale Japanese Garden Festival

Every year, Normandale Community College has a Japanese Garden Festival. Located right on the campus of the college, the Japanese Garden spans two acres and provides a calm place to think and relax. This year, the Japanese Garden Festival is on September 21st, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. At the festival, there will be traditional Japanese food, garden tours, koi feedings, martial arts, and kids' activities, as well as flute, drum, sword, origami, and ikebana demonstrations. Plans for constructing the garden began in 1967, before the college's campus had even been fully developed. The college donated two acres of land for the garden, while the garden



*The Japanese Garden at Normandale Community College*

clubs raised the funds to build it. Through the participation of chief architect Takao Watanabe, the swampy lands behind Normandale Community College became the Japanese Garden.

Normandale Community College is located at 9700 France Ave S., Bloomington, MN 55431. The Japanese Garden is directly behind the college.

To contact the Garden, please call 952-358-8145.

For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/NormandaleJapaneseGarden/>

## 月例日本人会のお知らせ

毎月日本語図書館で日本人会の昼食会 (Monthly Nihonjinkai) を行っています。電話などでお誘い合わせの上、お友達やお知り合いとご一緒においで下さい。可能の方はどうぞ料理を1品ご持参願います。ミネソタ州在住の日本人達で良い事を考え、ご馳走と日本語で楽しい時間を持ちましょう。

日程：毎月第2月曜日正午より

場所：日本語図書館

(4231 Bloomington Ave S., Minneapolis, MN 55407)

また、毎週土曜日午後2時から、日本語図書館のお手伝いしてくださる方の集まりがあります。是非ご参加ください。この図書館には、漫画や宗教誌約25000冊や約2500本のビデオDVDがあり、希望者にはセルフサービスで日本人会と同じく無料で貸出しています。お問い合わせは下記までどうぞ。

Yoko Breckenridge

Cell phone: (612) 839-0008

E-mail: [ybreckenridge@cbburnet.com](mailto:ybreckenridge@cbburnet.com)

(Nihonjin-kai monthly meeting is every 2nd Monday at noon. The meeting is held at 4231 Bloomington Ave S. Minneapolis, MN 55407).



# Advertise in the Tsushin!

## Advertisement Rates

Style	Size	Cost/issue
1/4 page	5 x 3.5 in	\$50.00
1/2 page	5 x 7.5 in	\$90.00
Full page	10 x 7.5 in	\$150.00
Classified	80 character line	\$10/ line (minimum 2 lines)

Ad production and design available in both Japanese and English for an additional charge. Deadline for completed ads and classifieds is the 20th of every month.

**Questions? Contact  
the JASM Office  
Tel: 612-627-9357  
jasm@us-japan.org**

## Calendar

### October

**Corporate Roundtable with  
Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. - October 3rd**

## Japanese Conversation Clubs



The Japanese Speaking Club is an informal meeting place for those wishing to practice Japanese. We encourage those just beginning the

language as well as native speakers to gather at **Corner Coffee** in Uptown Minneapolis to meet new people, discuss experiences in Japan, or simply to speak Japanese. Come when you can, leave when you must.

**Date/Time:** Every Saturday at 3:00 p.m. (however, most people do not show up until at least 3:30).

**Place:** Corner Coffee, 1414 W 28th St, Minneapolis, MN 55408. (Just east of Hennepin Avenue South.)



Another group for studying Japanese!



Check out **Twin Cities Japanese Language Study Group** <http://meetu.ps/c/3fPSK/FQBBY/d> on Meetup! This is a private group. In order to join, several questions must be answered by following the link above.

# Thank You, Obon Volunteers!

The 2019 Japanese Obon Festival was made possible thanks to contributions from the following organizations and volunteers:



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**SURDYK'S**  
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Marc Blehert	Linda Lor	Cain Russell
Anna Boguszewski	Jinting Lu	Luca Russell
Emi Bollum	Robert Luck	Mami Russell
Yume Bollum	Sahya Luck	Noah Russell
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Tomoko Drake	Hiroko Nagai	Jutta Thompson
Andreas Dufalt	Kent Nagai	Marie Thorsten
Chiaki Dziewieczynski	Asako Nakauchi	Cat-Thy Trihn
Yuriko Farmer	Torin Ogawa	Mio Uchiyama
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Yuri Jinno	Claire Restad	Masako Yoshida
Iris Johnson		Kaw Zan



*T-shirt  
Design:  
Cat-Thy  
Trinh*

JASM would like to thank all of these wonderful volunteers and organizations for spending their time and effort on the 2019 Japanese Obon Festival.

## Become a JASM Member online

**Support our mission and become a member!**

1. Go to [mn-japan.org](http://mn-japan.org)
2. Click on 'Membership' at the top
3. Select your membership type and read the benefits and instructions.

You can also become a member using your smartphone.

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



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www.mn-japan.org

## 通信

Tsūshin  
September 2019

The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a non-profit, non-political association engaged in bringing the peoples of Japan and the United States closer together in mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation. Through programs and interchange, it endeavors to promote an appreciation of cultural, educational, economic, public, and other affairs of interest to both peoples. Membership in the society is open to individuals, corporations, and other organizations interested in furthering its programs.

The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a member of the National Association of Japan-America Societies.

*(Please report any inaccuracies you find in this publication to [jasm.interns@gmail.com](mailto:jasm.interns@gmail.com))*

## 2019 Japanese Obon Festival

