

Japan America Society of Minnesota



通信

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

May 2022 Vol. 31, No. 5 revised

Recap: Webinar “Tattoo History” with Emi Nijiya



More than thirty-five JASM members and friends “tuned in” on April 28 to learn about tattooing history and culture. Tattoo artist Emi Nijiya gave us a great introduction to this fascinating topic!

Emi (they/them) is a tattoo artist who owns Jackalope Tattoo in Minneapolis, MN. Over the years they have worked hard to create a tattoo shop that is a safe space for BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ people, women, and folks from all walks of life.

The word “tattoo” originates from the Tahitian word “tatau” which means “to mark something.” Going back centuries (to around 3300 BC), tattoos were not always used for decoration and adornment. Over time tattoos have been used in many ways: as a form of identification; social status indication; family lineage; marks for spiritual protection or indicating one’s faith; and marks indicating a person had committed crimes or was a member of an incarcerated or enslaved group.

Emi showed us images of many types of tattooing tools used over time and globally. Early tattoo inks were made from soot, ground stones, and other natural materials. Older techniques often involved rubbing soot into shallow incisions. Mummies have been useful in providing information about some of the oldest known tattoos.



Japan has one of the earliest documented cultures to practice tattooing. The Ainu, an indigenous group from northern Japan, practice tattooing. Their predecessors, the Jomon, left behind ceramic figurines indicating tattooing, dating back millennia. Ainu tattooing was exclusive to females, beginning in childhood. Ainu tattoos were used to show age and social status, repel evil spirits, protect

from disease, and assure a good afterlife. Ainu people have resisted tattoo bans and have worked to maintain this aspect of their culture.

... continued page 4.

Save the Date: JASM 50th Anniversary Harukaze Concert 2022

We are very excited to have our first in-person event in two years!



To kick-off JASM’s 50th Anniversary year, the first big event is our Harukaze concert at Hamline University’s **Sundin Music Hall on Sunday, June 12th at 3pm.**

This year, we are honored to present three Minnesota artists: Rie Tanaka, pianist; Yuki Tokuda, classic ballet dancer; and Jessi Nummelin, cellist. They will perform a program entitled *Primavera*. We are very pleased to have this wonderful performance as the kickoff for our year-long celebration of JASM’s 50th anniversary.

Please mark your calendar! The details are coming to you soon.

Save the Date: Mia Curator Talk for “Minneapolis’ New Clothes: Dressed by Nature—Textiles of Japan”

Another upcoming event is the lecture “*Minneapolis’ New Clothes: Dressed by Nature—Textiles of Japan*” presented by Dr. Andreas Marks, Mary Griggs Burke Curator of Japanese and Korean Art at the Minneapolis Institute of Art on **Thursday, June 30 at 6:00 p.m.** on Zoom.

In this webinar Dr. Marks will introduce Mia’s new special exhibition on Japanese textiles which will be on view between June 25 and September 11, 2022. (See page 3 for more details.)

Please watch for an email from us with the registration link!

Mia (Minneapolis Institute of Art) is a JASM corporate member.

Mia
Minneapolis Institute of Art

Letter from the JASM President



My first visit to Japan began with a misunderstanding. I had arrived in Narita Airport the night before to be greeted by my college girlfriend, Sahya, who escorted me to her apartment in a quiet neighborhood in Ogikubo. The next morning, Sahya went off to work, and I decided to explore Shinjuku, a straight shot from Ogikubo station on the Marunouchi subway line. Everything went well until I arrived back at Ogikubo station, looked

around, and realized I had no idea how to get back to Sahya's place. Any cat can tell you that it's a lot easier to climb up a tree than to go back down, and, by extension, *nobori* (going up) to a big station like Shinjuku is easier than *kudari* (going down) to an apartment buried in a suburb.

This was in 1984, decades before cell phones and mapping apps. No problem, I thought. I had Sahya's address written down, so I figured I'd just jump in a taxi. I got into a cab, and showed the address to the driver, who responded with a flood of Japanese. When it became clear that I had no idea what he was saying, he told me in English, "I'm sorry, I don't know how to find this place." Big misunderstanding, thinking a taxi could take me to any address in Tokyo. It turned out that, back in those days, passengers gave instructions, and many taxi drivers didn't carry maps. I eventually managed to get out of my predicament by calling Sahya on a payphone. She explained in painstaking detail the route back to her apartment.

I have been thinking a lot about misunderstanding lately, since it appears that misunderstanding and its evil twin, mistrust, have played an important role in Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Misunderstandings between Japanese and Americans abound, but our two countries have developed an incredibly close connection in the nearly 80 years since the end of World War II. Much of the credit for that goes to the Japanese and U.S. governments and diplomatic corps, who worked hard to forge mutual understanding and overcome tensions such as those that occurred over automobile imports in the 1980s. But a fair share of the credit goes to individual relationships and grassroots organizations such as JASM. I am proud of the role that we have played in developing a dense web of friendship and trust between the U.S. and Japan that overwhelm the inevitable misunderstandings. This year is our 50th anniversary; let's celebrate our accomplishments in developing connections between Minnesota and Japan, and recommit to continuing this important work.

Bob Luck, JASM President



Recap: New Member Social 2022



On Thursday, April 20, JASM held the New Member Social 2022 on Zoom.

First, Executive Director Rio Saito gave welcoming remarks to JASM's new members.

Shortly after we all introduced each other, Aiko Hatano, who is the JOI (Japan Outreach Initiative) coordinator and has been working with us since January, provided an overview of JASM's activities held throughout the year.

This year for the first time we played a Jeopardy-like quiz game with four categories: JASM team, JASM event, Sister Cities, and general information on Japan. Except for the quiz about general information about Japan the questions were made from overviews of JASM activities and JASM staff's self-introductions. It was fun to play the game together and we hope that the new members have a better understanding about JASM after the meeting.

JASM Team	JASM Event	JASM Info	Sister Cities	Rank
100	100	100		
200			200	
300	300	300	300	
400	400	400	400	
1000	1000	1000	1000	

We were happy to get to know the new JASM members and are looking forward to seeing them at the next event!

Membership News (3/21 –4/20, 2022)

Thanks to the following new JASM members:

John Bergman, Theron Cromartie,
Eiko Mizushima, Kristen Stacey

Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Micah and Chiemi Bly, Keiko Doi,
Melissa Dunlap, Egan Frances,
Sarah Farley and Elizabeth Tisel,
Keiko Foss, Tia Gage, Thomas Greenwalt,
Sam and Mirja Hanson, Peter Hill,
Kurt Rempe and Motoko Hioki, Asako Hirabayashi,
Bob Joy, Magara Maeda, Barbara Shields,
Yokok Toda, Collin and Nell Wirth,

Thanks to the following renewing JASM Corporate members:

Naigai Industries U.S.A., Inc.
JK's Table
Sait Paul Saints Baseball Club

Save the date for the 2022 JASM Charity Golf Scramble



JASM will be holding our 2nd annual charity golf scramble event on **Saturday, September 17** at **Pioneer Creek Golf Course** in Maple Plain, MN.

Enjoy a fun day of competition with friends while supporting JASM. This event is limited to 72 participants.

Look for registration details in upcoming Tsūshins and emails.

For further information, please contact:

Tom Haeg, 612-940-3351 tomhaeg@msn.com

Marc Blehert, 763-280-2108 mblehert@yahoo.com



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with your support!*

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Dressed by Nature: Textiles of Japan at Minneapolis Institute of Art

(From Mia website: [Dressed by Nature: Textiles of Japan — Minneapolis Institute of Art \(artsmia.org\)](https://www.miamuseum.org/exhibitions/dressed-by-nature-textiles-of-japan))



(Picture above) Japan, late 19th-early 20th century, Festival kimono decorated with carp ascending a waterfall made in Akita Prefecture (detail), cloth: cotton; shibori (shape resist), The John R. Van Derlip Fund and the Mary Griggs Burke Endowment Fund established by the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation; purchase from the Thomas Murray Collection, 2019.20.84

June 25, 2022 - September 11, 2022

Target Gallery

General Admission \$20; Mia member \$16; Investor+ Free; Youth 17 and under Free

The Japanese archipelago is home to extremely diverse cultures that made clothing and other textile objects in a kaleidoscope of materials and designs. This exhibition will focus on the resourcefulness of humans to create textiles from local materials like fish skin, paper, elm bark, nettle, banana leaf fiber, hemp, wisteria, deerskin, cotton, silk, and wool. It will showcase rare and exceptional examples of robes, coats, jackets, vests, banners, rugs, and mats, made between around 1750 and 1930, including the royal dress of subtropical Okinawa, ceremonial robes of the Ainu from northern Japan and the Russian Far East, and folk traditions from throughout Japan.

Recap: Webinar “Tattoo History” with Emi Nijiya continues...

Okinawan women also have a strong tattoo tradition, dating back centuries. Indigo and black tattoos were made on their hands, indicating many social factors. As with the Ainu, Okinawans have worked to protect their tattoo tradition and resist bans.

In later centuries, tattoos were used as in Japan as punishment or warning. People who committed crimes received forehead or arm tattoos. Yakuza (Japanese gangsters) later used decorative tattoos to cover the criminal tattoos and to indicate their position in their gang.

Tattoos for the general populace were banned in Japan in 1872. The ban was lifted after 1945; a 1948 law restricted tattooing to medical practitioners, making it very difficult for people to find a tattooist. That law was finally rescinded in 2020.



Tebori Tattooing

Traditional Japanese tattooing is done with the tebori technique (translates to “hand carving”), tracing back to the Edo period (1603-1868). The tools employ a row of needles adhered to a wood or metal handle. It is a very slow method. Tebori masters perform the tattoos in an ongoing rhythm. Tebori tattooing sometimes covers large areas of the body (called bodysuit tattoos).



Source: (C)Edo Wonderland



Source: Inkedway.com

American sailors and soldiers loved Japanese tattoos, and some learned tattooing while stationed in Japan in the 1940s. These servicemen brought their tattoos and tattooing skills back to the U.S., which created the base of western tattooing. Norman Collins, better known as Sailor Jerry, learned from Japanese tattoo masters and became hugely influential as an artist and technician in the U.S.



About Sailor Jerry

Tattooing equipment began modernizing in the late 19th century with the invention of the first electric tattoo machines. More advances in equipment/technique came in 1929, and in 1978 rotary machines were invented – lighter, quieter, more portable, and more comfortable for the tattoo artist. Today's equipment provides a better experience for both the artist and the person receiving tattoos.

Emi concluded their presentation with a Q&A session. The last questioner raised the issue of appropriation and Emi gave a nuanced response, helping us understand what to consider and expect if non-Japanese people are thinking about using Japanese language or imagery in tattoos. Emi was unequivocal about white practitioners profiting from Japanese imagery: they said that is definitely appropriation. Director Rio Saito expressed appreciation, and all agreed that it's a discussion we need to keep having. – Recap compiled by JASM member Betty Tisel

Recap: 30th National Japan Bowl — Digital Japan Bowl III



From April 21-22nd, the winners of this year's J-Quiz participated in the 30th National Japan Bowl, also known

as Digital Japan Bowl III. As the name shows, the National Japan Bowl was held online rather than in Washington D.C. because of the continuing pandemic.

This competition brought together students from high schools spread across many states to demonstrate their Japanese cultural, historical, and language knowledge on the online platform Hopin. Hopin allows the students to interact with each other more freely throughout the competition (as compared to Zoom or other applications).

From Minnesota and Wisconsin from our J-Quiz winning teams, there were the following students participating.

Level 4: Nicolas Kaminski, Bruce Lee, and Lachlan Canavan from Madison County Day School, WI
Level 3: Luth Khairulhuda, Chandra Tran, and Nick Nguyen from Shakopee High School, MN
Level 2: The Shakopee High School team had to cancel. Nathnael Theis and Ethan Vang from Southwest High School, MN participated instead.

Preliminary rounds were held on the first two days. A special teachers' round celebrating the Japan Bowl 30th anniversary



was held just before the final rounds. It was very exciting to watch the teachers (who usually watch the students) compete — but this time they were watched by the students! Two teachers from our J-Quiz program participated: Patty Breun-sensei and Mina Morichika-sensei. They did a great job!

Besides the competition there were a lot of activities offered in Hopin: Tea ceremony, Edamame Champ, origami, Prange Collection tour, translation workshop, puzzle workshop, Japanese board game, Kahoot raffle quizzes, and more.

JASM would like to express gratitude to all the sponsors supporting the J-Quiz winners' participation in the National Japan Bowl — Digital Japan Bowl III. (See the list page 5.) We also appreciate the organizers of this year's Japan Bowl for their dedication and hard work, which made this year memorable for students once again. And, of course, we would like to congratulate all this year's J-Quiz participants for their resolve and diligence in furthering their own knowledge of Japanese.

You can watch [the National Japan Bowl Livestream](#) on YouTube.

Special Thanks to our Sponsors for National Japan Bowl 2022

We are grateful to these generous sponsors:

Daikin Applied

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The Japan Foundation— Los Angeles

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TOMODACHI

Ken Port Scholarship supports Japan Bowl expenses for the Level 4 winning team.

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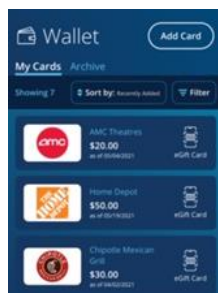
Hello JASM Members,

Please join me in using the RaiseRight mobile app by ShopWithScrip to help raise funds for JASM!

I have been participating in this program for more than two years. I have found this to be an easy, satisfying way to support JASM by simply making purchases that are part of everyday life. This is done by buying gift cards for local merchants via the RaiseRight app. You receive the full value of the card while a percentage is also donated to JASM.



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I use this service when I shop at Target, splurge on a Caribou, buy gas, make a purchase on Amazon... As you can see, with RaiseRight, any time you spend on life essentials, you can support JASM too. The only cost to you is basically a couple seconds of your time to load a gift card.

Please join me and other JASM members in this fundraising initiative. I guarantee you WILL be making a difference in helping to secure the survival of JASM long into the future.

Please give me a call or send me an email if you are interested in learning more about how you can help support JASM via your daily purchases!

Marc Blehert, mblehert@yahoo.com, 763-280-2108

Tom Haeg's Book Review

Bye-bye Bag Lady; Marnie Jorenby, Hayakawa Press [Japanese only]; 2021.



Our narrator protagonist, Akebi, living alone with her father, confronts a situation: a homeless woman on the streets of Kobe, despised by local urchins, a woman reputed to carry numerous bags and as many scarves. Her father nevertheless offers the woman a room in their apartment, much to Akebi's shock. And here the plot thickens, and the pace hastens. While the bag lady was initially seen as a 'monster', she mutates into a *kishimojin*, a goddess, who protects unborn and vulnerable children. And now the closer: we discover why Akebi's father graciously took in the bag lady, the connection to Akebi, and the meaning of the bags and scarves.

Bag Lady is written in Japanese by a native Minnesotan whose only residence in Japan was her senior year of college. Quite amazing. Written initially on speculation (no advance, no agent, no publisher), her target readers are Japanese high schoolers. She believes they are too obsessed with manga instead of with text-only books.

The storyline highlights traditional Japanese culture and values such as respect, patience, and tolerance. Its deft use of idioms adds depth and meaning to subtly remind her young readers of hope and to better appreciate their elders' values.

Jorenby was recently interviewed by Minnesota Public Radio to find out what on earth could possibly possess her to take on this Herculean task. Modest in her reply, she said: "If you write a sentence in English, it's the 26 alphabet characters. But you can do so much more with so many more characters."

Satomi Kawaguchi and Tom Haeg

On Sunday, May 1, Satomi and her husband, Jim Glover, leave for Poland to serve as volunteers for Ukrainian refugees. They will be there for two weeks ministering to families - and bag ladies - dispensing kindness, hope, and chocolates. [Follow them on Facebook.](#) [The book on Amazon.co.jp](#)

North Dakota News from Japanese Cultural Association, University of North Dakota

JASM would like to showcase Japan-related activities in North Dakota, where there is no Japan America Society or similar group. To support and put our neighbors in the spotlight, we started this new occasional series.



One of our Cultural Events:
Japanese Calligraphy

Hello everyone! We are the Japanese Cultural Association (JCA), one of the student cultural organizations at the University of North Dakota. We are a non-exclusive club with members from various ethnic backgrounds who share an interest in Japan. Our purpose

is to enjoy sharing and learning about Japanese culture together. We provide opportunities to experience Japanese culture and language, and to deepen friendships among Japanese, Japanese Americans, and those who are interested in Japanese culture.

JCA is a very young organization that officially began its activities in 2021. Every Wednesday and sometimes on weekends we organize various activities such as Japanese language sessions, Japanese cultural events, or participation in social cultural events.

On March 5th, our university hosted a large cultural event called "Feast of Nations," where various cultural student organizations participate and present their cultures on stage. JCA has performed the Soran Bushi, one of the



Soran Bushi at the "Feast of Nations"

most famous traditional sea shanty songs and dances in Japan. It was a great experience for us to broaden our knowledge about various cultures including Japan. This participation led to new encounters for us, and today we have the opportunity to have this text published in an article in the Tsūshin!

Grand Forks is a very small college town. Our resources for activities are very limited, so we try to make our activities more enjoyable by shopping at one small Asian store and online. Surprisingly, Grand Forks has a Japanese garden and is the only city in North Dakota that has a formal friendship relationship with Japan. Therefore, from this small town of Grand Forks, we would like to be a small part to promote Japanese culture. We hope this article will be the first step in that direction.

Kyohei Shimizu, President kyohei.shimizu@und.edu
Ryuki Kawamoto, Vice President ryuki.kawamoto@und.edu



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海外に在留されている邦人の皆さまへ

在シカゴ日本国総領事館からの海外在住者へのお知らせの転写です。

日頃より、当館の領事サービスにご理解、ご協力いただきありがとうございます。
今回は海外に居住される国民年金第3号被保険者の方に対する大事なお知らせです。

既に所属勤務先等から案内がなされていると存じますが、令和2年4月1日に施行された医療保険制度の適正かつ効率的な運営を図るための健康保険法等の一部を改正する法律（令和元年法律第9号）により、国民年金第3号被保険者（健康保険や共済組合員の被扶養者として認定されている配偶者）の要件として国内居住等の要件が追加されました。

これにより、海外赴任に同行する国民年金第3号被保険者は、特例要件（※）に該当する旨を勤務先事業所に届け出る必要があります。

※ 特例要件

- 1 海外において留学をする学生
- 2 外国に赴任する被保険者に同行する者
- 3 観光、保養又はボランティア活動その他就労以外の目的で一時的に海外に渡航する者
- 4 被保険者が外国に赴任している間に当該被保険者との身分関係が生じた者であって、2と同等と認められる者
- 5 1～4のほか、渡航目的その他の事情を考慮して日本国内に生活の基盤があると認められる者

本件は所管している厚生労働省によりますと、日本年金機構において、住民基本台帳の個人番号情報に基づいて、令和2年4月以降に国外転出した方を確認する事務処理を開始しており、この結果、海外居住が確認された国民年金第3号被保険者について、特例要件に該当する旨の届出（第3号被保険者関係届）の提出がない場合には、個別に周知されることなく資格喪失処理が行われることとなります。

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※ 手続きの詳細はこちらからも確認いただけます。

（日本年金機構HP）（<https://www.nenkin.go.jp/service/kounen/tekiyo/hihokensha/kyojuyoken.html>）

当館連絡先

Tel: (312) 280-0400（24時間対応）（注）

Fax: (312) 280-9568

Email: ryoji1@cg.mofa.go.jp

（注）コロナウイルス感染症予防のため、現在業務体制を縮小しております。平日午前9時15分から午後5時までは音声案内に従って操作しますと担当部門につながります。土曜・日曜・祝祭日、平日午後5時以降、翌日午前9時15分まで（事件、事故、その他緊急の用件）は、音声に従って操作しますと、閉館時の緊急電話受付につながります。

The Gift of Cherry Trees from Japan



The Saint Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee (SPNSCC) is celebrating the 10th anniversary of the gift of cherry trees to Como Park on Saturday, June 4, from 9 to 11 am.

Japan America Society of Minnesota (JASM) will participate in the event. Please visit our table when you are there.

The trees were a gift from the government of Japan in 2012 to the City of St. Paul. Each year the trees have grown and have blossomed more gloriously each spring.

This is a free, family friendly festival from 9 to 11 am on Saturday, June 4, at the cherry tree grove by the Mannheimer Memorial in Como Park. Some of the highlights are a drum performance by Harisen Daiko and a dance performance by Sansei Yonsei Kai.

MN Japanese Library Update



The MN Japanese Library will be closed until further notice for a renovation project. The library is not accessible; please do not try to enter until further notice.

Japan America Society of Minnesota

- ☐ Membership Application ☐ Change of Address
- ☐ Membership Renewal ☐ Tax-deductible Donation

Name _____

Name (2nd adult of a household membership) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

I would like to make an additional tax-deductible donation of _____

Amount Enclosed: _____
(Please make checks payable to JASM)

Japan America Society of Minnesota
P.O. Box 26639, Minneapolis, MN 55426

Individual Membership

Patron.....	\$1,000+
Sustaining.....	\$500+
Contributing.....	\$100+
Individual	\$30
Student	\$20
Household	\$50
(2 adults plus children under 18)	

Become a JASM Member

Support our mission and become a member!

- Go to mn-japan.org
- At the top, hover over 'Support' then click on 'Join'
- Select your membership type and read the benefits and instructions.

You can also become a member using your smartphone.

Advertise in the Tsushin!

Advertisement Rates

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

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
jasm@mn-japan.org**



J | A | S | M

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通信

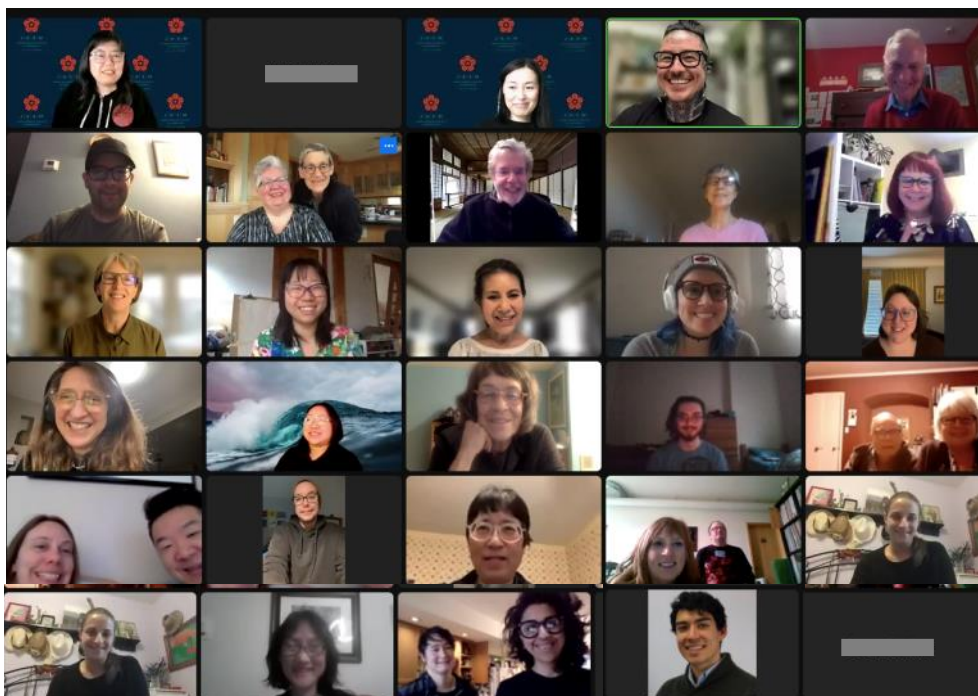
Tsūshin
May 2022

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@mn-japan.com

April Event 2022



(Above) Participants of the webinar “Tattoo History: A talk about the connections between Japanese and Western tattooing and the growth to today’s tattoo industry”



(Right)
National Japan Bowl—Digital Japan Bowl III