# Japan America Society of Minnesota







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

September 2022 Vol. 31, No. 9 revised

## **Recap: Obon Festival 2022**



After a two-year hiatus, the Obon Festival finally returned to Como Park in Saint Paul on Sunday, August 21. Obon is a Buddhist holiday that occurs in August each year to commemorate one's ancestors, whose spirits are believed to temporarily return to this world to visit their relatives during Obon. There are many

different traditions that go along with this holiday but one of the most popular is the lighting of lanterns. The lanterns are first lit since it is said to help guide the spirits back to their families, and the lanterns are eventually set into lakes and rivers to guide the spirits back into their world. Here in Minnesota, our

rendition of Obon blends this traditional rite with a variety of performances, games, and activities that promote and celebrate Japanese culture. Let's review some highlights from the 2022 festival!

The festival started at 3PM, and while the first half hour was a bit slow at the JASM booths, from 3:30 or so to the end of the festival at 8, the JASM booths were constantly swarmed with festivalgoers. The Kingyo sukui (rubber fish scooping) and Yo-Yo tsuri (balloon catching) games had long lines of attendees ardently wanting a chance to win prizes. These games were popular particularly amongst children, but many adults also had a blast trying to win prizes. Parents hovered, taking adorable pictures of their children trying hard to secure Yo-Yo and rubber fish. *Continued on page 3...* 

## Mondale Scholarship Recipients 2022-2023

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2022-2023 Mondale Scholarship. 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.

This year the Mondale Scholarship Selection Committee chose five recipients. Congratulations to all recipients!



Maya Green

attending the Japan program at Bunkyo Gakuin University in Tokyo for my study abroad this fall. I chose to attend CSB specifically for this program and have taken many Japanese language and history courses as well as participated in Japanese cultural events throughout my time on campus in preparation for this experience. I'm very excited to finally go to Japan because I've been fascinated by the country and its culture for a very long time.



Aly Hayashi

My name is **Aly Hayashi** and I am a junior at Macalester College. I will be attending Kansai Gaidai University in Hirakata for my study abroad this spring. I am very excited to study abroad at Kansai Gaidai to experience Japanese culture and learn about my ethnic

My name is **Maya Green**, and I am a senior at

the College of Saint Benedict. I will be



Joshua Marine

background.

My name is **Joshua Marine** and I am a rising senior at Macalester College in St Paul, Minnesota. I will be attending CET: Japan's study abroad program in Osaka at Osaka Gakuin University for my study abroad this fall semester. I have wanted to study in Japan for a few years now, so I am both excited and grateful that it is actually happening!

My name is **Alex Saros** and I am a junior at Macalester College. I will be attending Waseda University in Tokyo for my study abroad this spring. I'm very excited to become immersed in Japanese language and culture and aim to pursue my interests in Japanese politics and music during my time abroad. I'm also very honored to have been selected for the Mondale Scholarship!



Alex Saros



Chong Sarah Thao

My name is **Chong Sarah Thao** and I am a junior at St. Olaf College, majoring in Psychology and Japanese. I'll be attending Waseda University through the Japan Studies homestay program in Tokyo for my study abroad this fall. I've always dreamed of going to Japan, and studying the culture, history and language has been so interesting that I'm excited to finally experience it all in person and immerse myself to the fullest while attending Waseda.

## **Message from the Executive Director**



Hello Japan America Society of Minnesota members, I hope you are enjoying the end of summer and the beginning of fall. JASM had a successful obon festival in August. It was very exciting to bring back the summer festival for the first time in two years, and we would like to thank everybody who participated in the festival. First, we would like to thank all the volunteers who worked with us to make the festival happen. It was so great

to see you all in person; we could not have had this festival without you. Also, we would like to thank everybody that who came out to the park and enjoy the festival. It is wonderful to know that so many people were looking forward to the comeback of the festival! It encourages us to continue serve our community. And the groups that we cannot forget to thank are the Como Conservatory and the Saint Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee. There were a few obstacles in the process of planning this year's festival, but because of the teamwork of the three organizations we had a great return of our beloved festival. We can't wait to work with all of you for next year's festival! And to those who came to the festival: thank you again, and please consider volunteering for JASM. You can enjoy the festival a little bit differently and it will be a wonderful experience.

We are also excited to offer another Golf Tournament! Last year, this golf event was our only in-person event, and the weather was perfect! We hope more of you can join us. Big thank you to Marc Blehert and Tom Haeg for great leadership for this event. Those two volunteers are the sole reason this event is back!

I wanted to share my gratitude once again to all our members and to event participants. I spent a few days in New York City to attend the National Association of Japan America Societies gathering, where 38 representatives of Japan America Societies across the country come together to learn and share their experiences. As I hear everyone's stories, it really made me appreciate all over again how lucky JASM is to have such a wonderful, active membership. We promise to continue our activities, expand our outreach efforts, and grow our community together with you. Please continue supporting JASM, not only with your membership, but also with your great talents and wisdom, for the continuing friendship and shared culture of Japan and Minnesota.

Thank you very much— Rio Saito JASM Executive Director





## Save the Date for Mondale Gala (in person)



We are pleased to announce that the 2022 Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala will be held in person on **Saturday**, **November 19th at the Oak Ridge Country Club in Hopkins**. Please mark your calendars!

The 25th Mondale Gala will pay tribute to Ambassador Mondale, who greatly strengthened the relationship between Japan and the United States and was an avid supporter of JASM. *The Mondale Award* was created 25 years ago as a way to recognize individuals who walked in

Amb. Mondale's footsteps in their outstanding achievements in continuing to build the bond between Japan and Minnesota. At the same time, the Mondale Scholarship was created to provide financial support for selected students studying in Japan.

We have not been able to recognize **Bill Deef** and **Sarah Walbert**, the award winners in 2020 and 2021 respectively, as well as scholarship recipients in person due to COVID. Therefore, they will also be recognized alongside the





Bill Deef, 2020

Sarah Walbert, 2021

2022 winners at this year's gala. Please join us to celebrate the award and scholarship recipients as well as JASM's 50 years of strengthening Minnesota-Japan relations.

## **Membership News** (7/21 – 8/20/2022)

#### Thanks to the following new JASM members:

Mitsy Lutz, David Mixon

#### Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Paul and Michiko Buchanan, Kat Dalager,
Bruce and Tomoko Drake, Peter Gavin,
Jeffry and Mitsuko Hensley, Noriko Ishida,
Akihiko Ito, Daniel Johnson, Keiko Kawakami,
Ron and Molly Leonhardt, Benjamin McDonald,
Hiroko Nagai, William Paterson, Jane Powers,
Steven Ray, Daniel Rolf,
Yoshio and Naomi Satoh, Kay Thomas,
Keith Vargo, Alfred Zdrazil

# Thanks to the following renewing JASM Corporate members:

Dorsey & Whitney LLP
Macalester College Asian Languages and Cultures
JETRO Chicago
Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.
Minneapolis Institute of Art

## Recap: Obon Festival 2022 continues...



There was also a steady stream of festivalgoers at the J-Quiz, calligraphy, and general JASM booths. The main booth was busy throughout the day selling a variety of exclusive Japanese items; the masks in particular were very popular. It was truly special to see attendees wearing JASM masks as they wandered through the festival. The masks allowed them to connect with and experience aspects of an authentic Japanese

summer festival. At the J-Quiz booth, participants challenged themselves and learned about Japanese culture. Finally, festivalgoers had a chance to see calligraphy master Shimano-san in action as he drew calligraphy. There were certainly more people at these booths than in years past. It seems that there is an ever-growing interest in Japanese culture. JASM couldn't be happier and will continue to promote and introduce Japanese culture to Minnesota through our events and connections.

JASM cannot thank its volunteers who helped out at the festival enough! All booths were fully staffed by volunteers, and led by either volunteers or interns, meaning that JASM's booths would not have been possible without the generous help of volunteers. Even though it was a long and tiring day, the volunteers had a blast. Whether it was coming together to make water balloons for the Yo-Yo Tsuri booth or managing the nonstop rush throughout the day, there was a wonderful sense of community and camaraderie. It was a special sight to see so many people who had never met before bond and have fun working together.

In addition to JASM booths, there was so much going on at the Obon Festival. The depth and variety of events, exhibits, and booths were truly special. There were incredible performances on the main stage including Taiko drumming, dancing, singing, and even a drag king performance! The main stage was organized by St. Paul Sister City Committee: huge shout-out to them! In addition, there was a ton of delicious food, various martial arts demonstrations, and booths selling a variety of Japanese merchandise and promoting Japanese culture.

Thank you to all those who came to the festival and stopped by at JASM booths. Another huge thank you to our wonderful volunteers without whom the JASM booths would not have been functional. JASM would also like to thank Como Park Zoo & Conservatory and St. Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee in their support of the Obon Festival. Finally, we would like to thank the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment and Metro Regional Arts Council for their contributions in funding the festival.



## metro regional arts council



#### **JASM volunteers 2022**

Jeff Albright
Joy Alcala
Amarja Babtiwale
Priscilla Barrientos
Tara Bianchi
Emi Boonin
Athena Brooks
Michiko Buchanan
Janelle Erickson
Jon Gutzmann
Tisha Hacihmine
Tasbiha Fatima Hasan
Alice Hu
Deborah Huskins

Mio Iashida

Rebecca Jasper Akiko Kashiwagi Samuel Kim Kathryn Kibanoff Steven Kreitz Ron & Molly Leonhardt Jeffrey Lonjers Seigo Masubuchi Catelyn Matchefts Rachel McCarthy Stephen Mihalak Ayaka Moriyama Ema Nagata Jeff Peterson Matt Princev Mark Prpich
Luke Rogers
Lydia Rose
Marcia Sanoden
Joe & Yoshiko Shakal
Cecilia Ouyang (T-shirts
designer)
Betty Tisel
Sarah Walbert
Rosalyn Yasui

Aravindh Subramanian— JASM volunteer coordinator Aiko Hatano—JASM program assistant

# Please thank our members with your support!

#### Corporate Benefactor Members

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MTS Systems Corporation
Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.
Taiyo International

#### Corporate Patron Members

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#### Corporate Contributing Members

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Satellite Industries, Inc.
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#### Partners in Service

Kiku Enterprises, Inc.
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University of North Dakota-Grand Forks

World Languages

Winona State University Global Studies and



## JASM 40 years ago

As part of our 50th anniversary celebrations, we would like to show you (or let some of you remember) a tiny part of the past. Here's a glimpse of how it was 40 years ago from the JASM newsletter.



March 1982

#### NEWSLETTER . JAPAN AMERICA SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA

#### SOCIETY HOSTS CLARK

Gregory Clark--diplomat, correspondent, author and TV personality in Japan--will discuss March 29 the nature of Japanese enterprise management and economic success at the Minnesota Club in St. Paul.

Society members will receive additional details about the event in a separate sailing.

#### EMBASSY HOLDS NATIONAL MEETING

Honorary Consul General of Japan in Mirnesota W. Soren Egekvist attended the first meeting of Consul Generals (career and honorary) of the United States and Japan at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. The two-day meeting, which began Feb. 17, focused on Japan-America relations.

Ambassador Yoshio Okawara was present throughout the meetings. Egekvist was surprised to learn that Ambassador Okawara served under the same director Egekvist serve under when he was on General MacArthur's staff.

The ambassador asked Egekvist to prepare some contacts for Okawara's May visit to Minneapolis to address the Minnesota World Trade Conference and the Japan-America Society of Minnesota.

Robert Jung, executive vice-president of Thermo King of Minneapolis, who was in Washington for business, met Egekvist at the embassy of Japan. Together they presented a framed picture of the Normandale Japanese Garden and extended an invitation to the ambassador to visit the garden in May. Jung in May will present the same picture to U.S. Ambassador Mike Mansfield in Tokyo.

Jung is a board member of the Normandale Japanese Cardon and a member of the Japan-America Society of Minnesota.

#### DINNER BENEFITS GARCEN

The Normandale Japanese Carden Committee sponsored a benefit dinner March 2. The garden is on the campus of Normandale Community College in Bloomington. It was designed by Takao Watanabe, a landscape architect from Japan.

#### CHICAGO COUNCIL FUNDS LABOR TALK

"How Japanese Deal with the Problem of Worker Replacement" is the subject of a speech that Professor of Law Tadashi Henemi, Sophia University in Tokyo, will give April 21 at the Sherator-Ritz botel in Minneapolis.

The Society will co-spensor Hanami's speech with the Japan Learning Excharge of the World Affairs Center, the Industrial Relations Center of the University of Minnesota and the Upper Nicwest Council. Funding comes from the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations.

#### CHICAGO COUNCIL CRAMIS GEM PROGRAM

The World Affairs Center is the recipient of a \$1,000 grant from the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations and the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission. The Center will use the grant to fund its Global Education: Minnesota conferences on Japan for schools and civic groups in out-state communities.

#### MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES TO CROW

The Japan-America Society of Minnesota has 217 numbers, reports Shirley Huskins, membership secretary.

Of that total, one is honorary, six are sustaining, 21 are contributory, 185 are family and four are student memberships.

#### North Dakota News

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.

The July 31st Fargo Meets Japan event, presented by Sushi Burrito, was a huge success. According to their web site, there were 1304 attendees from 1 to 5 pm.

Because of all the connections we've been able to make over the past year, the event was held at Fargo's Broadway Square. And the greatest thing about this



event was that all the performers donated their time! There was an Okinawan Karate demonstration by Hidden Teachings Dojo (hiddenteachings.com), the Muso Shinden Ryu Iaido performance by Aggasiz Dojo

(www.agassizdojo.com), and a Soran bushi (Japanese fisherman's dance) dance by the Japanese Cultural Association of the University of North Dakota. As Japan Outreach Initiative Coordinator from

Mayville State University, I hosted interactive activities of Hanachozu (Japanese modern flower arrangement), Kendama (sword & ball game), Koma (tops toys), and Daruma Otoshi (wooden blocks game). Volunteers also sang J-pop songs on stage. Fargo Meets Japan's event committee took the role of MC and one member, Superjuice, a DJ with Radio Free Fargo (KRFF 95.9 LPFM), was in charge of sound during the stage program. Sushi Burrito Cafe sold popular rice balls and cold drinks.

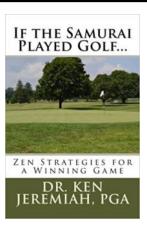
There were interactive booths for Origami Kabuto (paper Samurai helmets) and bookmarkmaking with names in Japanese. At the busiest time, more than 60 people visited one table in 2 hours. All volunteers and attendees had a blast!



This event could be a great kick-off for expanding Japanese culture in the Fargo-Moorhead area. JASM and Consul-General of Japan in Chicago will host another big Japanese event on Saturday, September 24th. The event title is "Rhythm of Japan in ND: Celebrating the friendship of North Dakota and Japan". It will be held from 2 -4 PM at North Dakota State University Festival Hall. Japanese drum team Tsukasa Taiko will come from Chicago to perform on the stage. Thanks to the Consul-General of Chicago, it will be a FREE event. We are so excited to host this event in Fargo as a JASM event. Please save the date!

Aiko Hatano, JASM Program Assistant

## Tom Haeg's Book Review



JASM will host its second annual charity golf tournament on Saturday, September 17, 2022, at the Pioneer GC in Maple Plain, MN. Here are some readings about Japanese golf you may enjoy while you fine tune your game.

If the Samurai Played Golf – Zen Strategies (Dr. Ken Jeremiah, CreateSpace, August 2012, 240 pages) is an in-depth explanation of Zen techniques and mental discipline to control body movements to improve the golf swing. If you go to any five-tier driving range in Tokyo, you might find a copy lying around.

Putting Analyzed (Japanese edition; 1932, 99 pages) is a Japanese adapted version of a popular instruction book originally published in English in 1927. It includes foldouts featuring photos of Bobby Jones, Gene Sarazen, Walter Hagen and others. The first edition in Japan immediately sold out. Current value: you don't want to know (but if you have to ask, maybe \$100-\$400.) A collectible (don't use a magic marker to highlight on this).

Nigh Shah! Nice Shot!: Memoirs of an American Duffer in the Far East (Wilder Durand, 1972), a golf travelogue book focusing on Japanese golf course nuances and etiquette. You may think you are reading about golf, instead you are learning about who you are.

Golf in Japan: a Murder (John Beaumont, 2019) is a whodunit murder mystery with international intrigue and social tensions set upon the stately grounds of a Japanese golf course.

Finally, and not least, is a book (well, booklet) published by the Japanese Government Railways in 1934, *Golf in Japan*. The game of golf was an overnight rage in Japan. Englishman C. H. Allison had just designed a score of Japanese golf courses and perhaps the only way of getting to them was by passenger rail. It is a complete list and description of Japanese courses in the 1930s.

See you on 1<sup>st</sup> tee on September 17. Fore!

Tom Haeg



# **Upcoming: 2022 JASM Charity Golf Scramble**



FORE!!! JASM will be holding our annual charity Golf Scramble Tournament at <u>Pioneer Creek Golf Course</u> in Maple Plain, MN, on **Saturday**, **September 17**<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm. (705 Copeland Rd #9787, Maple Plain, MN 55359)

This tournament will follow a scramble format where the best ball per foursome is the one that counts. Regardless of your handicap, all teams have a shot at a birdie on every hole in a scramble. All tournament proceeds will benefit JASM's operations and programming.

Please invite your friends, family, and co-workers to this safe, fun outdoor event!

The tournament is limited to 18 foursomes. You can arrange your own foursome, or we'll get one for you. <u>Please sign up an</u> individual or a group. All are welcome!

In the event of inclement weather, the tournament will be rescheduled.

#### Saturday, September 17, Tee off at 1:00pm

Registration and check-in begin at 12:00 noon. Please arrive no later than 12:30pm.

#### Registration fees

\$100/\$115 (JASM member/non-member) per person

Registration deadline is September 9th. You will receive a confirmation email after the completion of your registration.

Registration includes: Driving range, Golf cart, Green fees, Prizes and lots of fun!!

If you have questions, please contact:

Tom Haeg, 612-940-3351 tomhaeg@msn.com Marc Blehert, 763-280-2108 mblehert@yahoo.com

## How to Find Your JASM Membership Card

We are excited to be able to introduce JASM membership cards! Here's how to find your card.



1. Go to the JASM Website (<a href="https://www.mn-japan.org/">https://www.mn-japan.org/</a>) and click on "log in" on the upper right corner.



2. When you are logged in, click on your name displayed in the

upper right corner. Then click "View profile". Your card will then be displayed! Click on "Printable PDF" if you'd like to download or print out your card.





## North America Kendama Open 2022 by Sweets Kendamas



The North American Kendama Open, the United States' largest annual kendama event, is coming up on September 9-11 in Minneapolis, hosted by Sweets Kendamas. Come and watch the exiting competition! To observe the competition you need to purchase a SPECTATOR PASS for entry into the event. Usually a 3-Day Spectator Pass is \$60, and Single-Day Passes are \$25. However, if you are a JASM member you get a great discount! Please show your JASM membership card (see page 6) onsite at the registration desk to get the discount!

JASM Member Price: \$30 for 3-Day Spectator Pass and \$15 for Single Day Pass

Please read the event details by clicking here. If you are not a JASM member please click here to purchase the pass. NAKO 2019 - GET HYPED for the North American Kendama Open

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

JASM received a discount code to visit the new special exhibition Dressed by Nature: Textiles of Japan which will be on view at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, our corporate member, from June 25th through September 11.

You can use the discount code (50% off) to purchase 4 exhibition tickets per transaction. Code: **DRESSEDBYJASM** (For purchases, please visit Mia's website <u>here</u>)

(From Mia website: Dressed by Nature: Textiles of Japan — Minneapolis Institute of Art (artsmia.org))



(Picture left) 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.



# JASM

# JAPAN AMERICA SOCIETY of MINNESOTA

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Tsūshin September 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

#### **Obon Festival 2022**

