

Japan America Society of Minnesota



通 信

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

August 2023 Vol. 32, No. 8

Recap: Summer Festival Dance Workshop: Bringing Japanese Summer to the Sculpture Garden (in person)



JASM hosted an event: the *Summer Festival Dance Workshop: Bringing Japanese Summer to the Sculpture Garden* on

Sunday, July 9. As this time of year usually is, it was a sunny hot day but with a little breeze, which was helpful for the dancers.

This year we learned the *Uraja* dance. “Uraja” is based on the ogre “Ura” from the Okayama folk tale “The Story of Ura”. The Uraja-odori Festival in Okayama, Japan is an event that everyone can join in and enjoy with a single purpose regardless of age, gender, or nationality. At the beginning of the dance workshop, Rio Saito, JASM Executive Director, taught some Japanese words that are helpful for understanding the dance movements: *migi* (right), *hidari* (left), and *atama* (head).



The workshop was led by Maria Traxler of MinneSoDance, who guided us first through some basic steps of the dances, then taught the *Uraja* dance movements step by step. No matter the skill level, everyone was able to participate. We saw that even some bystanders were dancing, and everybody had a great time.

JASM would like to thank Maria Traxler and MinneSoDance for teaching us the *Uraja* dance with passion and fun. Also, we would like to thank Neva Dalager and Kevin Dietz for providing us with great sounds. This was a free event, sponsored by the Japan Foundation. We appreciate all your support for our mission to connect Japan and Minnesota.



Save the Date: Obon Festival 2023



Please mark your calendar for Obon Festival 2023 at **Como Park on Sunday, August 20 from 3 pm to sundown** for a celebration of Japanese culture and tradition. There will be food, singing, dancing, martial arts, a marketplace and organization fair, and

of course, lantern lighting! This is a family friendly event perfect for people of all ages.

Attendees will be required to pre-purchase tickets online. We will update our website when the tickets are available. ([Here](#) is the information from Como Park.)

If you are interested in volunteering at one of the JASM booths, please see page 2.



Register Today for the 2023 JASM Charity Golf Scramble



JASM will be holding our 3rd annual charity golf scramble event on **Saturday, September 23** 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.

Registration fee:

Early Bird price through August 23

\$90: Non-member, \$75: Member

From August 24 to September 16

\$115: Non-member, \$100: Member



Please click [here](#) to register or scan the QR code.

For further information, please contact:

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

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

Message from Executive Director Rio Saito



Hello members, friends, and family of JASM. Hope you are having a great summer so far. We have been very busy connecting with so many people and having a great time. In June, we had our Harukaze concert with wonderful Asako Hirabayashi and Mayumi Amada. The music written by Asako-san, "The Boy Who Drew Cats," was beautiful and mesmerizing, and was performed by many talented musicians. The concert

was received so well by the audience and the whole event was so warm. It really reminded me of why I do what I do.

We are so fortunate to be invited to different companies and organizations to share Japanese culture. In recent months, I've given talks or presentations for companies like Jamf, Zimpro, Billy's Sushi, and TOMODACHI. We participated in St. Paul Nagasaki Sister Cities' Sakura Festival, the Burnsville International Festival, and CONvergence: the Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention. I would like to thank the volunteers who joined us to introduce JASM! They intrigued event participants with their descriptions of being part of JASM.

I was also lucky enough to visit the Consulate General of Japan in Chicago for Midwest Forum, where the representatives of 10 states in the Midwest gather and discuss the future of the Japan-America relationship. It was great to see people who have the same goal as us, and we bonded and learned so much from each other. Our district (Midwest) is so fortunate to have a Consulate that cares so much and supports grassroots communities like ours.

We continue to kick things into high gear as the Obon festival approaches! Please join us and volunteer at the festival. We can only have a successful festival with your help. It is a lot of work, but at the end we always have a great time. It's a fantastic way to meet others who love Japan and Japanese culture!

As Japan has opened back up, many people are returning there for tourism and business. The sister cities are bringing back their visits to MN and this year, MN is hosting participants of the Grassroots Forum from Japan. The participants of the summit will stop by Minnesota after their visit to Ohio for the main forum. We are looking for host families who can host our guests for 2 nights. If you are interested, [please check our website and register](#).

For the rest of 2023, JASM will continue working hard to connect people. Please keep us in mind and join us when you can. It is always so much more fun to build our community together in person. Hope to see you at Obon!

Rio Saito, Executive Director



Rio Saito (left) and Mio Ishida, JASM Board Member, demonstrating how to fold a samurai helmet with newspaper at the Burnsville International Festival

2023 Mondale Award Nominations



2022 Mondale Award Recipients, Judith and Gayle Fleming. Mirja Hanson, Mondale Award Committee member

JASM hopes to continue the distribution of this esteemed award this year. If you know someone who has dedicated their efforts to the continued benefit of the U.S-Japan relationship, please nominate them! All applications must be submitted either by email to jasm@mn-japan.org or by filling out the form [here](#) by **August 16**. Find the criteria description [here](#).

In 1997, Japan America Society of Minnesota created the Mondale Award for Japan Minnesota Partnership to recognize outstanding contributions to the building of understanding, cooperation, and respect between the people of Japan and Minnesota. The award was named for — and first presented to — Joan and Walter Mondale to recognize Mrs. Mondale's decades-long effort to promote the arts in both countries, and Ambassador Mondale's service as United States Ambassador to Japan. We will continue celebrating the life and legacy of Walter Mondale through the Japan America community.

Membership News (6/21 – 7/20, 2023)

Thanks to the following new JASM members:

Sarah Deschamps, Jeff DuBois, Kim Gustafson,
Eriko Nakato

Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Robert Atendido, John Babcock, Kat Dalager,
Setsuko Dulski, Kim Habig, Tom Haeg,
Donald Klein, Gloria Kumagai,
Darryl and Yukiko Magree,
Christopher Mincks, Hiroshi and Eriko Nakato,
Elisheva Perelman, Marcia Sanoden,
Steven Savitt, Lisa Shakerin, Luke Walbert

Thanks to the following Corporate Members:

Miller Milling Company —*New member*

Kiku Enterprises Inc.

Saint Paul Saints Baseball Club

Meet Our Board Member: Jack Koepke



My name is Jack Koepke. I am new to the JASM board, having joined in January 2023. Since joining the board, I have been working on defining and developing member relations with our JASM staff and other board members.

I am an attorney with the Taft, Stettinius & Hollister law firm in Minneapolis. I primarily deal with assisting banks, private lenders, and businesses in financing mergers, acquisitions, and other transactions.

Prior to becoming a lawyer, I worked in finance for a large corporation in the Twin Cities. While other board members may have a long, interesting, and engaging story about how they are connected to Japan, I did not have a connection to Japan until a few years ago when I spent some time visiting friends in Tokyo. Before this, I did not have any exposure to Japan in any way, but while visiting I quickly grew to appreciate the country. I have only visited Tokyo and Hakone, so there is much more for me to explore, and I look forward to the next opportunity to visit.

I joined JASM while in law school shortly after I returned from Japan, and I have enjoyed participating in events and meeting others with similar interests – especially at the Mondale Gala. If you see me at an event, don't hesitate to say hello! I live with my wife and children in the west metro. I love Minnesota and I will gladly share what makes this state special with anyone who will listen. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve JASM on its board of directors, and I am committed to promoting the ties between Japan and Minnesota through JASM.

Jack Koepke, JASM Board Member

Hiroshima and Nagasaki Commemorations Saint Paul- Nagasaki Sister City Committee



Nagasaki Commemoration

Greetings from Nagasaki
and St. Paul City Hall
A Bowl Full of Peace
Healing Meditation led by Nancy Hyvarinen
Sansei Yonsei Kai dancers

When: Tuesday, August 8th, 7:00pm
Where: Global Harmony Labyrinth in Como Park, St. Paul

The Minnesota Peace Ribbon will be displayed at the August 6 and 8 events. Please bring your own chair to these events. The Hiroshima Nagasaki Commemoration Committee offers these events to the community to encourage reflection on the past and hope for the future through action in the present. It calls for the total abolition of nuclear weapons throughout the world as one measure of ensuring a just and lasting peace.

Support from Veterans for Peace, Chapter 27, Women Against Military Madness (WAMM), Back from the Brink, and the Saint Paul - Nagasaki Sister City Committee.

For further information:
www.stpaulnagasaki.org | MSPHNCC@gmail.com
il.com | 952.261.3891

Commemorative Tea Ceremony

Yukimakai Tea Study Group

When: Saturday, August 5th, 7:00pm
Where: Lyndale Park Peace Garden at Lake Harriet, Minneapolis

Hiroshima Commemoration (Ceremony of the Cranes)

John Laforge, keynote
Sadako and the Thousand Cranes
Bellringing by Veterans for Peace
Moment of Silence
Music by Chickpea and Stringbean

When: Sunday, August 6th, 7:30am
Where: Lyndale Park Peace Garden at Lake Harriet, Minneapolis

*Please thank our members
with your support!*

Corporate Benefactor Members

Daikin Applied
Delta Air Lines, Inc.
MTS Systems Corporation
Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.
Taiyo International

Corporate Patron Members

Dorsey & Whitney LLP
Miller Milling Company

Corporate Sustaining Members

Arctos Law PLLP
Deloitte Tax, LLP
Hamre, Schumann, Mueller & Larson, PC
Japan Lifeline Co. Ltd.
Mall of America
Medtronic, Inc.
Metropolitan Airports Commission
MGK, Inc.
Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese
Naigai Industries U.S.A. Inc.
The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Ltd.

Corporate Contributing Members

Briggs and Morgan, P.A.
IACE Travel
Murata Vios Inc.
Satellite Industries, Inc.
Surdik's Liquor & Cheese Shop
Taft, Stettinius & Hollister LLP
UMEI

Partners in Service

JK's Table
Kiku Enterprises, Inc.
Minnesota Trade Office
Sakura Restaurant
Saint Paul Saints Baseball Club
Saji-Ya Restaurant
Suishin Restaurant
TOMODACHI
Voyager Group Inc

Nonprofit Members

Concordia Language Villages
Economic Club of Minnesota
Global Minnesota
JETAA Minnesota
JETRO Chicago
JP Network, St. Cloud State University
KCC-Japan Education Exchange
Macalester College Asian Languages & Cultures Department
Minneapolis Japanese School
Minneapolis Institute of Art
Minnesota Orchestra
Mu Performing Arts
NDSU-Emily Reynolds
Historic Costume Collection
Red Wing Sister Cities Commission
Twin Cities Aikido Center
UMN Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
University of North Dakota-Grand Forks
Winona State University Global Studies and World Languages

Sakura Circle Membership

Sam and Mirja Hanson
Noriko Ishida
Ron and Molly Leonhardt
Bob and Hisayo Luck
John and Hiroko Shade

North Dakota News: Grand Forks Japan Fest



*Schroeder Middle School
Japanese Culture club Bon
dance performance*



*Soran-bushi (fisherman's dance)
by Japanese Cultural Association
at University of North Dakota*

The Grand Forks Japan Fest at the Farmer's Market on July 8th was hosted by Aiko Hatano, Japan Outreach Initiative Coordinator based at Mayville State University, and Kara Hung, Kanuma Exchange Coordinator. It was a great success. Japan Fest started with Radio Taiso with local kids on the stage and with the audience. Throughout the event, several stage performances such as karate by Shotokan Karate in Grand Forks and koto by Sarah Coomber (JASM member) entertained the crowd, and some participants joined in the Bon Odori dance by Schroeder Middle School students and Soran Bushi (fisherman's dance) performed by University of North Dakota students. There were also booths for visitors to try some activities such as origami and traditional toys, and Japanese snacks and stickers were on sale. Also, several Farmer's Market vendors, including Little Bangkok, Top Shelf Shaved Ice, Urban Stampede, Due North GF bakery, Sun and Moon Jewelry, and Whisky Soul Creations sold Japanese-related items especially for the festival.



*From left, Shunsuke Aoki, JOI
coordinator based at Dickinson
State University, Ms. Rebecca
Ferdere of North Dakota Trade
Office (Former JASM Intern!),
Honorary Consul Mr. Ron
Leonhardt, Aiko Hatano, JOI
coordinator based at Mayville State
University*

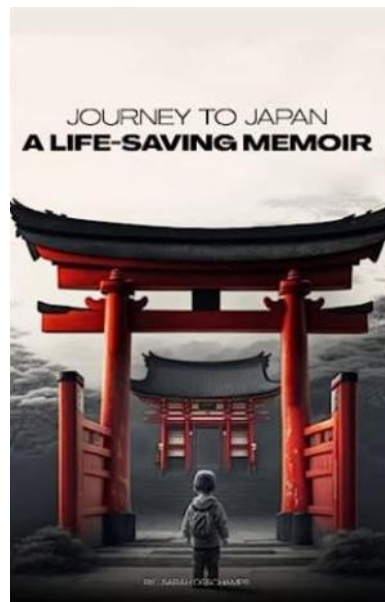


*Japanese volunteers joined singing
Furusato (hometown) and Sakura
with Koto performance by Sarah
Coomber (JASM member)*

On July 7th, over 100 attendees gathered at the Empire Arts Center for the highly successful Japan Fest Kick-off movie night. The event, coinciding with Tanabata, the Star Festival in Japan, celebrated both the traditional festival and the start of Japan Fest. Guests enjoyed music performances by special guests Duo Cantabile and Red River Trio from the University of North Dakota. These talented musicians also shared their experiences from their recent visit to Kanuma City in Japan, a friendship city of Grand Forks. The highlight of the evening was the screening of the Japanese film "Dad's Lunchbox," which enthralled the audience with its heartwarming story. Ron Leonhardt, Honorary Consul of Japan in Minneapolis, came and gave opening remarks at both events.

*Shunsuke Aoki
JOI coordinator at
Dickinson State University*

Tom Haeg's Book Review



*Journey to Japan: a Life-Saving Memoir; Sarah Deschamps,
Rocky Road Press, 2023; 241 pages.*

"Gradually, then suddenly." -Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*

This laconic quote strangely remains apropos while reading *Journey to Japan*. It describes a character who went into financial bankruptcy: gradually (unbeknownst) and then suddenly (all the way). Similarly, Deschamps limns her own emotional bankruptcy: moving to Japan while she was eight months pregnant, and delivering a child who survives seven major medical surgeries in three years. She had no foretelling prophecy that her baby would be in peril. There was no medical diagnosis until the delivery. She could not speak Japanese. She was alone and desperate. There was the omnipresent risk of disfigurement and death. A marriage was tested. She met her nadir.

And yet amid the crisis she garnered a visceral strength to survive for her child. She would not quit. She would endure. She spun ebb into flow, a valley into a mountain. Perhaps unwittingly the Japanese national character just wore off on her: 'bear the unbearable.'

Deschamps, a new JASM member and a returning Minnesota resident, admits that the writing project took more than seven years. She must have retained copious notes because her attention to detail is quite amazing. The memoir pays special attention to chronological order so that the reader may concentrate on the pathos.

Although *Journey to Japan* is self-published without an editor (yes, there are occasional grammatical and style errors), the gentle and forgiving JASM reader will overlook the small mistakes to focus on and appreciate her humanity, compassion, and perseverance: so typical of Japan. I did.

Tom Haeg

TRYLON cinema



ALL IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES!

Aug 6-8
SAMURAI WOLF (1966)

Aug 13-15
THREE OUTLAW SAMURAI (1964)

Aug 20-22
BANDITS VS. SAMURAI
SQUADRON (1978)

Aug 27-29
VIOLENT STREETS (1974)

Promotional support for this series has been provided by Japan America Society of Minnesota.

JASM June Event Calendar

August 20 Obon Festival

September 23 JASM Charity Golf Scrumble

Become a JASM Member

Support our mission and become a member!

1. Go to mn-japan.org
 2. At the top, hover over 'Support' then click on 'Join'
 3. Select your membership type and read the benefits and instructions.
- You can also become a member using your smartphone.

オンライン申請時における領事手数料のオンライン決済導入のお知らせ

This is a message from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

【本メールは、通常、お住まいの国・地域を管轄する在外公館から送信している領事メールとは異なり、在留邦人の皆様に向けたご案内であるため、外務本省からお送りしています】

7月10日から、お住まいの国・地域を管轄する在外公館において、旅券等をオンラインで申請した方（現地時間7月10日（月）午前0時以降に受理したオンライン申請が対象）については、これらの領事手数料のオンライン決済（クレジットカード／デビットカード）が可能となります。

オンライン申請の対象となる申請の詳細は、申請予定の在外公館ホームページをご確認ください。

＜オンライン決済の概要＞

- 1 手数料
円貨建て（現金払いの場合は現地通貨となります）

す）

- 2 利用可能なクレジットカード
VISA、MASTER、AMERICAN EXPRESS、DINERS、JCB
- 3 利用可能なデビットカード
VISA、MASTERがついているものに限られます。
- 4 決済手数料
無料。ただし、日本以外で発行されたカードの場合は、カード会社により、別途、手数料がかかる場合があります。
- 5 領事窓口でのクレジットカード決済はできません。オンライン上での手続きをお願いします。

■ 領事手数料のクレジットカードによるオンライン決済について

https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/toko/page22_004053.html



J | A | S | M

JAPAN AMERICA SOCIETY
of MINNESOTA

P.O. Box 26639
Minneapolis, MN 55426

jasm@mn-japan.org
www.mn-japan.org

通信

August Tsūshin
2023

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

July Events



Burnsville International Festival



Summer Festival Dance Workshop: Bringing Japanese Summer to the Sculpture Garden (in person)



Paper-Sumo Booth in TOMOCACHI at MOA

