



ConsuLink

April/May 2023 Newsletter

Keeping you updated on Japan-related news in Michigan and Ohio

Spring Brings Floral Festivals to Saitama & Shiga

Just as April showers bring May flowers to Michigan and Ohio, spring brings flower-themed celebrations to their sister-states in Japan, Shiga and Saitama prefectures. The [Chichibu Shibazakura Festival](#) (pictured below) takes place each year near Mt. Buko, in central Saitama. Tourists flock to Hitsujiyama Park to admire the 10 colorful varieties of 400,000 *shibazakura*, or moss phlox, flowers covering the ground.



In the eastern part of Shiga, near the town of Hino, the Blumen Hügel Farm (pictured below) hosts a [Tulip Festa](#) each spring. It features 120,000 tulips in three different gardens on the 87-acre working farm, as well as German-themed eateries and gift shops. There are over 100 farm animals, plus a zip line, miniature train, and carnival rides. Other spring blooms at the farm include canola, narcissus, and nemophila flowers.

Photo credits: [Voyapon.com](#) (above); [Blumenooka.jp](#) (below left); [Japanese Tours](#) (below right)



Japanese Language and Culture Events Resume In-Person Format

This spring, various competitions for Michigan and Ohio learners of Japanese returned to an in-person format. On March 5, the Japanese Teachers Association of Michigan and the Hinoki Foundation co-hosted the Michigan Japanese Quiz Bowl & Culture Festa at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Hundreds gathered to cheer on the MJQB teams and enjoy presentations by Sakura Instrumental Group, U-M Kendo Club, Shimane University exchange students, and other volunteers. Of the 22 teams of middle and high school students in the MJQB, the following took top honors.

Middle School Div.: Team Himawari (Troy Larson MS)
High School Div. I: Team Inu (Troy Athens HS)
High School Div. II: Team Onigiri (Troy Athens HS)
High School Div. III: Team Kiji (Troy Athens HS)
High School Div. IV: Team Suisei (Troy HS)



On March 11, the 28th annual Michigan Japanese Language Speech Contest was held at the Novi Civic Center. The Japan Business Society of Detroit, JSD Women's Club, Japanese Teachers Association of Michigan, and the Japan America Society of Michigan & Southwestern Ontario generously provided judges and prizes for the contest. Of the eight contestants (pictured with judges below left), the following received prizes.

High School Division

1st place: Vaishnavi Paliwal (Troy HS)
2nd place: Saisha Srivatsan (Troy Athens HS)
3rd place: Aryan Vadlamudi (Troy Athens HS)
Honorable Mention: Emami Williams (Detroit Renaissance HS)

University Division

1st place: Lucia Lee (Univ. of Michigan)
2nd place: Louis Champoux (Eastern Michigan Univ.)



On March 25, the Japan America Society of Central Ohio (JASCO) hosted the 25th annual Ohio Japanese Speech Contest at the University of Findlay. Of the 13 contestants (pictured with judges above right), the following received prizes.

1st place/Consul General Award: Chloe McLeod (Univ. of Toledo)
2nd place/JASCO Award: Inne Singgih (Univ. of Cincinnati)
3rd place: Sherry Zhu (Case Western Reserve Univ.)
Honorable Mention: Alan Aneeth Jegaraj (Univ. of Cincinnati)

Congratulations to all the winners, and thank you to all the sponsoring organizations who made these events possible!

SPOTLIGHT ON OHIO ACADEMIC IN THE JAPAN-US INTERFACE

JET Alum Professor Expands Access to Learning Resources about Japan

For Dr. Ann Marie Davis, Associate Professor and Japanese Studies Librarian at The Ohio State University (pictured below left), a brief visit to Japan as a college senior put the first of several twists in her career path. Originally a history and European studies major, the Virginia native was so intrigued with Japan that she decided to apply for the JET Program upon graduation, and ended up spending four years working in Nagano prefecture, as an Assistant Language Teacher and a Coordinator for International Relations.



A lingophile with skills in French, German, and Spanish, Dr. Davis soon gained enough proficiency in Japanese to pass the Level N2 Japanese Language Proficiency Test. Returning Stateside, she earned graduate degrees in East Asian studies and Japanese history, then added a library science degree. As OSU's Japanese Studies Librarian since 2016, Dr. Davis curates Japan-related resources, such as the manga collection at the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum (above right). She also teaches specialized courses about Japanese history and culture, both for OSU students and K-12 teachers, encouraging curiosity about the world beyond their own communities.

Dr. Davis believes that, without opportunities to "appreciate the richness of human culture, our perspectives remain limited...It is more important than ever to think creatively about how to build a sustainable and peaceful life together on this one, small, fragile planet."



ConsuLink is the official newsletter of the Consulate-General of Japan in Detroit

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[CGJ Website](#)

CALENDAR

Exhibits & Events

Through June 25:
[Pondering Mystery of Late Life](#) Exhibit @ Dayton (OH) Art Institute

Wed., May 3
[Japanese Conversation Group](#) @ Novi (MI) Public Library

Sat., May 6
[Japan America Community Night](#) @ TQL Stadium, Cincinnati, OH

Sat.-Sun., May 6 & 7
[Koi Festival](#) @ Belle Isle Aquarium, Detroit, MI

Sun., May 7
[Far East of Midland Presentation and Tea Ceremony](#) @ Japanese Cultural Center, Saginaw, MI

Sun., May 13
[Hanami Spring Picnic](#) @ MSU Tollgate Farm, Novi, MI

Sat.-Sun., May 13-14
[Michigan All-State Bonsai Show](#) @ Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids, MI

Fri., May 26
[JASCO Japanese-English Language Exchange](#) @ Columbus, OH

Thur.-Fri., June 1 - 30
[Little Trees, Big Impact Bonsai Celebration](#) @ Ann Arbor, MI

Sun.-Sat., June 11-17
[9th Annual Ann Arbor Japan Week](#) @ Ann Arbor, MI

Wed., June 14
[JASGC JET Alumni & Friends Summer Meetup](#) @ Cincinnati, OH

QUICK LINKS

[Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan](#)

KIZUNA



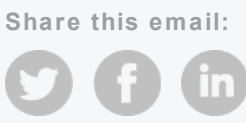
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Digital publication reporting on a variety of topics, promoting stronger links between Japan and the world.

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