



ConsuLink

Aug./Sept. 2023 Newsletter

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

Flowers and Fruits Abound in Saitama & Shiga

In late summer, fruit and flowers are plentiful in Ohio and Michigan, as well as in their Japanese sister-states of Saitama and Shiga. In addition to larger-scale harvesting, some farms in Japan offer "U-pick" options for fruits like grapes, blueberries, and apples. Individuals are able to hand-pick bunches of grapes at vineyards in places such as Tokorozawa, Saitama (pictured below left) and Makino, Shiga (pictured below right). In Japan, grapes are more of an expensive specialty food than a daily snack, so farmers often wrap each bunch on the vine in protective paper to prevent damage by harsh weather, and to encourage uniform color and appearance.



Photo credits: [Travel.co.jp](https://www.travel.co.jp) (left); [Pic-land Odekake Blog](https://www.pic-land.com) (right)

In Japan, flowers have been used for many years on gravesites and in-home altars. A lesser-known tradition involves using cut flowers to decorate the *temizuya*, or hand-washing basin, located near the entrance of many shrines and temples. During the pandemic, when people were asked to refrain from the tradition of purifying hands and mouths at the *temizuya*, it once again became popular to decorate the (disused) basins with flowers, or *hana* in Japanese. The resulting displays are known as *hanachōzu* (literally, "flower hand water"). Examples of *hanachōzu* may be seen at Hi-yoshi Taisha in Ōtsu, Shiga (pictured below left), and at the Hachiman Shrine in Kawagoe, Saitama (pictured below right).

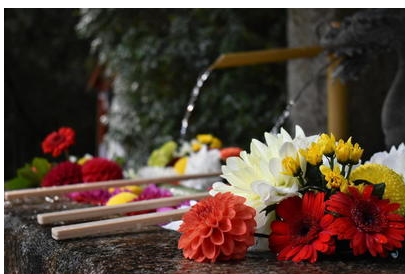


Photo credits: [Biwako Visitors Bureau](https://www.biwako-visitors-bureau.com) (left); [Kodawari Times](https://www.kodawari-times.com) (right)

CALENDAR

Exhibits & Events

Through January 14, 2024:

[Hiroshige II's Views of Famous Places in Edo](#) @ Dayton (OH) Art Institute

Sun., September 3
[Khamsin Japanese Jazz Group performs](#) @ Detroit Jazz Festival, Detroit, MI

Tues., September 5
[Teen Night: Japanese Foods](#) @ Public Library, Findlay, OH

Wed., September 6
[Sumo Talk at J-Chat Conversation Group](#) @ Wealthy Theatre, Grand Rapids, MI

Sun., September 17
[Japan Festival in Saginaw](#) @ Saginaw, MI
[Art of Bonsai Show](#) @ Hidden Lake Gardens, Tipton, MI

Sat., September 23
[Hiroya Tsukamoto Concert](#) @ Waynesville, OH

Fri., September 29
[JASCO Japanese-English Language Exchange](#) @ Columbus, OH

Sat., September 30
[Raion Taiko Performance](#)

In-Person Exchanges with Japan Resume

In early August, about 50 participants in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program (pictured below left) departed from Detroit Metropolitan Airport to begin their new positions in Japan, as Assistant Language Teachers in K-12 schools or Coordinators for International Relations. In addition to visitors to Detroit from its sister-city of Toyota, and visitors to Wyandotte from its sister-city of Komaki, Consul General Shindo also met with about 40 Michigan-based participants in the 2023 Goodwill Mission to Shiga (pictured below right) as part of their orientation. The delegation will spend 10 days in Michigan's sister state this October, the first Goodwill Mission to travel to Shiga since 2017. The [Michigan-Shiga Goodwill Missions](#) began 47 years ago with a group of Shiga residents visiting Michigan in 1976, and Michigan residents visiting Shiga in 1977, alternating every year until the recent 5-year hiatus due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Also this summer, the Consul General presented INOAC Vice Chairman and former JASMO Chairman Chuck Little (pictured below left) with a certificate of commendation at a celebration of Japan-US friendship in Farmington Hills, and joined Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer and other officials in welcoming Governor Taizō Mikazuki of Shiga Prefecture (pictured below right) during his visit to Lansing and Metro Detroit.



SPOTLIGHT ON INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE LEADER FROM OHIO

JET Program Alumna Leads Japan-America Society of Greater Cincinnati

When Ms. Anne Golden moved to Kumamoto, on the island of Kyūshū, to teach English to high schoolers as part of the Japan

@ International Festival,
Holland, MI

Sun., October 8
[Novi Japan Festival](#) @
Novi, MI

QUICK LINKS

[Ministry of Foreign Affairs of
Japan](#)



[Kizuna: The official magazine of the
Government of Japan](#)

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

[Consulate General of Japan in
Detroit](#)



Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, she had had no previous experience with Japanese language or culture. Now, more than 25 years later, Ms. Golden has served as Executive Director of the Japan-America Society of Greater Cincinnati (JASGC) since 2016. She is pictured below right with JASGC Board Vice President, Nicholas Yoda, at the 2022 JASGC Bonenkai.



A native of Maine, Ms. Golden had earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from Bates College, and a master's degree in higher education student development from the University of Maine, before she became an Assistant Language Teacher in Japan. She recalls that JET was "certainly a high-learning-curve type of experience and far exceeded my expectations in many ways." Ms. Golden ended up staying in Kumamoto for three years (the maximum allowed at the time), and has returned several times to visit Japanese friends there.

She explains that living in Japan taught her to be more tuned into the "give-and-take" of human relationships. "For example, when someone does a favor for you, or gives you a gift, no matter how small, you should look for an opportunity to reciprocate." Ms. Golden believes that learning to pay more attention to this has helped her to become a better person.

When asked about the longevity of the Japan America Society of Greater Cincinnati, which celebrates its 35th anniversary this year, Ms. Golden notes: "Greater Cincinnati is home to more than 150 Japanese-owned companies, so we have a healthy base of Japanese expats and their families here, along with long-term Japanese residents and numerous other locals who have a strong interest in learning more about Japanese culture." She added that several longtime board members have been "excellent stewards" of the organization.



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