



ConsuLink

August 2024 Newsletter

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

Fireworks Light Up Saitama and Shiga in August

Fireworks, or *hanabi* in Japanese, seem to be most popular in the U.S. during Independence Day celebrations in early July. In Japan, most fireworks festivals occur a bit later in the summer, from mid-July through mid-September. One of the longest-running of such festivals in Ohio's sister-state of Saitama is the Kumagaya Fireworks Festival (pictured below left), held on the second Saturday of August, beginning in 1948. The event includes a pyrotechnic competition, with approximately 10,000 fireworks set off over the Arakawa River and enjoyed by more than 400,000 spectators.



Photo credits: [InSaitama.com](https://www.insaitama.com) (left) and [Activity Japan](https://www.activityjapan.com) (right)

In Michigan's sister-state of Shiga, the Lake Biwa Great Fireworks Festival (pictured above right) will be held in Otsu on August 8th this year. At this annual event, around 10,000 fireworks are launched from barges on the water, making dazzling displays over Lake Biwa, the largest lake in Japan. The festival attracts an estimated 350,000 people, from inside and outside Shiga prefecture, to the harbor in the prefectural capital.

50 JET Participants to Depart for Japan

This month, 50 Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program participants are scheduled to depart from Detroit Metropolitan Airport to begin their new positions at schools and government offices at various locations in Japan. Deputy Consul General Shin Ogawa will host a pre-departure reception on Friday, August 2, for this year's JET participants, who will work as Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) and Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs) in Japan. Since 1987, the [JET Program](https://www.jet-program.com) has sent over 70,000 college graduates from more than 75 different countries (including

CALENDAR

Exhibits & Events

September 27 through 2025:

[Contemporary Japanese Ceramics](#) @ Denno's Museum Center, Traverse City, MI

Sat.-Sun., Aug. 3-4
[Really Cool Comicon](#) @ Dort Financial Center, Flint, MI

Wed., August 7
[Japanese Calligraphy, Crafts, & Snacks with Kawaguchi Visitors](#) @ Findlay Hancock County Library, Findlay, OH

Fri.-Sun., August 9-11
[Hinoki Bicultural Family Camping](#) @ Camp Dearborn, Milford, MI

Sat., August 10
[Matsuri Day Celebration of Higashiura Sister-Library](#) @ Public Library, West Bloomfield, MI

Sun., August 11
[MI-BON Summer Festival](#) @ Cranbrook Educational Community, West Bloomfield, MI

Sat., August 17
[JASCO Summer Japan Fest](#) @ Dublin, OH
[Notan Portrait Drop-In](#)

over 35,000 Americans) to work in Japanese schools, boards of education, and government offices to promote language and cultural exchange at a grassroots level. Applications for next year's program will open this fall.



Detroit Consulate Now on Instagram

We are pleased to announce that the Consulate General of Japan in Detroit now has [an Instagram page](#)! Our Instagram handle is "detroitcgj." Please follow us to stay up-to-date on Japanese culture and Consulate activities in Michigan and Ohio. Thank you!

SPOTLIGHT ON ART MUSEUM DOCENT AND TAIKO PERFORMER FROM OHIO

Leader in Arts and Music Education Prizes Her "Japanese Family" Members

Ms. Helen Rindsberg (pictured below right) of Cincinnati has been intrigued with Japanese culture since elementary school. She is now involved in a wide variety of Japan-related activities in the Greater Cincinnati area, and counts over 50 citizens of Japan as members of her "Japanese family." Ms. Rindsberg, a retired art teacher and school administrator, serves as President of the Cincinnati Asian Art Society, Director of the Cincinnati Dayton Taiko Ensemble, and Museum Docent at the Cincinnati Art Museum. She is also involved in the activities of the Japan America Society of Greater Cincinnati, Cincinnati-Gifu Sister City Committee, and the Cincinnati Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League.



Ms. Rindsberg was originally fascinated by Japanese ink paintings with their graceful brushstrokes and appreciation of nature. Her interest steadily expanded to include woodblock prints, textiles,

[Studio @ Grand Rapids Art Museum](#), Grand Rapids, MI

Fri.-Sun., August 30 - September 1

[Matsuricon @ Hyatt Regency](#), Columbus, OH

Sun., September 15

[Saginaw Japan Festival @ Japanese Cultural Center](#), Saginaw, 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](#)



hanging scrolls, and even folklore from Japan. She first visited Japan 40 years ago, staying with a host family. Then, she and her husband Steve began providing homestays in the U.S. for more than 20 visitors from Tokyo, Hiroshima, Nagoya, Fukuoka, Numazu, Inuyama, Tenri, and Gifu for periods ranging from six months to five years. The Rindsbergs count all of these guests--along with their spouses and children--as members of their "Japanese family," and the feeling is mutual. Several of them came to Tokyo to celebrate when the America Japan Society of Tokyo presented Ms. Rindsberg with the 2019 Kaneko Award for her many contributions to people-to-people diplomacy (pictured above left).

Ms. Rindsberg, who says she truly admires how Japanese people cherish their history and strive to keep traditions alive, has written a [novel and series of short stories](#) about Japan. She would like more Americans to "discover that Japanese culture is more than samurai, geisha, manga, and anime." She encourages our readers to try seasonal foods at a Japanese restaurant, attend a *taiko* drum performance, watch Japanese TV shows (such as *Midnight Diner*) and online Japan Film Festivals, and to check the [Consulate's Event Calendar](#) for other celebrations of Japanese culture.



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

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