

NIPPON QUARTERLY

Everything Japanese in the Fort Wayne Area

#31 – Oct. 2025

Sponsored by the Japanese American Association of Indiana, Inc., a 501 c (3) community organization (www.jaain.org).

Our goal is to:

1. provide communication between the various segments of the Japanese American population of Northeast Indiana
2. Give you information about events that have happened or will happen that pertain to Japanese American culture, education, and community issues.

This is your community newsletter. As much as possible, it will be in English and Japanese. We welcome your input. It is quarterly.

ニッポン・クォーターリー

～フォートウェインエリアの日本の全て～

#31 10/2025

本新聞は JAAI が主体となり発行する日米新聞です。

私達のゴール:

1. インディアナ州北西部にお住いの日本人とアメリカ人にコミュニケーションの場を提供する
2. 日米の文化や教育、コミュニティについて、イベントの報告やお知らせを行う

この日米新聞は上記の内容を含めた情報提供を目的としたニュースレターです。可能な限り日本語と英語にて提供していきますが、四半期毎に発行する予定ですので、もし何かインプットがございましたら是非ご連絡下さい。

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Miyabi Koto at
festival

Interview with Susannah Arthur, Fort Wayne Sister Cities Takaoka Chair

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1. Talk about your background

I was born in Florida, and when my parents separated at the age of seven, my mom brought us back to Fort Wayne where her family is from. My siblings and I grew up dividing our time between Fort Wayne and Miami, where my dad's family lives. That constant travel between two very different environments left a lasting impression on me. Miami is an incredibly multicultural city and being exposed to so many different communities and traditions there shaped my appreciation for diversity and broadened my sense of the world. In contrast, Fort Wayne offered stability and a strong connection to family, and I feel fortunate to have had the influence of both.

I graduated from Concordia Lutheran High School in 2003 and, only two weeks later, enlisted in the United States Navy. I served for eight years, first aboard the aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy (CV-67), where I traveled to Europe and the Middle East, and then at Naval Hospital Pensacola. My experiences during that time taught me discipline, resilience, and leadership, but more than that, they deepened my belief in the importance of cultural exchange and understanding.



Me in the desert just outside Dubai when I was deployed in 2004



Boot Camp at Great Lakes, IL 2003

At Pensacola, I had the privilege of serving as vice president of the Multicultural Committee, which focused on recognizing the contributions of diverse groups to American life. That role reinforced my conviction that embracing cultural differences makes communities stronger.

I later returned to Fort Wayne after I completed my service to be close to family once again and pursue my education. I graduated from IPFW with a BA in psychology in 2016.

2. If you were not from Fort Wayne or Indiana, why did you come here?

My family moved to Fort Wayne after my parents' separation, since my mom's family had roots here.

3. What is your occupation?

At this season of my life, I'm primarily focused on raising my two-year-old daughter, which has been both the most challenging and the most rewarding role I've ever had. Beyond motherhood, my academic background is in psychology. I'm passionate about the study of attachment theory and its potential applications in helping communities thrive. I believe that by better understanding human connection, leaders can design programs and structures that foster resilience and well-being across entire communities.



Susannah and daughter Eva at the Allen County Fair

Before completing my degree, I served eight years in the Navy as a Hospital Corpsman (medic), where I reached the rank of E5. My assignments included time aboard the USS John F. Kennedy and later at Naval Hospital Pensacola, where I was an enlisted supervisor in the Women & Children's Nursing Department. Those years in the military gave me invaluable leadership experience, and they profoundly shaped my perspective on service, the need for us all to connect and share in our basic humanity, and the critical role of mental health in both personal and community life.

4. What first attracted you to things Japanese?

Like many of my generation, I was first introduced to Japanese culture through video games, manga, and anime. But even as a child I was drawn to studying other cultures, especially through their artistic traditions. Japan's deep reverence for craftsmanship, its respect for nature, and the way art is seamlessly woven into daily life spoke to me in a unique way.

My father, who is a classical architect and builder, often admired the ingenuity and precision of Japanese architecture. He would talk about how impressed he was by the attention to detail and the creativity of Japanese builders. His enthusiasm definitely influenced me, and over the years Japanese art and design have continued to inspire my own creative work.

5. Have you traveled to Japan and, if so, why?

Not yet, though it has been a dream of mine since I was young. That's why I'm especially thrilled that this September I will finally have the opportunity to visit Osaka, Kyoto, and, of course, our Sister City, Takaoka. It feels like the culmination of years of admiration, and I'm excited not only to see the places I've admired from afar, but also to meet people and connect.

6. What aspects of Japanese art/culture do you particularly enjoy and why?

I have a deep love for Japanese visual art, particularly early paintings and woodblock prints such as ukiyo-e. But my admiration extends beyond painting—I'm fascinated by the elegance and craftsmanship of textiles, ceramics, and architecture. There's a remarkable dedication to beauty and precision across all of Japan's artistic traditions, and I think that sets it apart.

On a more personal, and quirky, note I've always enjoyed studying medieval history, and Japan's Heian through Sengoku periods have been especially intriguing to me. I also have a guilty pleasure in really enjoying Japanese ghost stories—the art is so colorful and it's so imaginative! And, like many, I'm a devoted fan of Hayao Miyazaki. His storytelling has meant a lot to me since childhood, and I look forward to introducing his films to my daughter as she grows up.

7. How did you become involved with Fort Wayne Sister Cities and then the Takaoka chair?

I first became involved with Sister Cities in 2019 when my childhood friend Anne Kolb invited me to join. She knew about my lifelong love of Japan and we share a passion for travel and promoting multicultural understanding.

Later, when our former chair, Joey Klinger, stepped down to focus on his career, I was honored to be asked to serve as chair of the Takaoka Committee. It's been a privilege to continue building on the work of those who came before me.

8. As the current Takaoka Sister Cities chairperson, what goals do you have?

One of my main goals is to facilitate more exchanges between Fort Wayne and Takaoka, especially among young people. I've been working on re-establishing the PenPal program between Fort Wayne Community Schools and schools in Takaoka, originally started by Ayano Furuya. Programs like these give students firsthand experience of another culture and can plant the seeds of lifelong curiosity and friendship.

I would also love to explore expanding the Japanese Friendship Garden into Swinney Park, creating a lasting and visible symbol of the bond between our cities. Beyond that, I want to bring more opportunities for residents here in Fort Wayne to experience Japanese culture directly—whether through art exhibits, music, food, or hands-on activities. These kinds of experiences not only enrich our community but also help people build empathy and appreciation for another culture.

9. How has learning about Japanese culture benefited/enriched your life?

Learning about Japanese culture has profoundly influenced how I think about both art and nature. It has taught me to see beauty not only in perfection but also in impermanence and simplicity. More broadly, it has expanded my understanding of how cultures express their values through traditions, and how much we can learn by stepping outside of our own perspective.

That, in turn, has given me a deeper sense of our shared humanity. When we open ourselves to seeing the world through another culture's lens, we gain empathy, humility, and a stronger sense of connection.

10. Besides serving on the Takaoka Committee, what hobbies do you enjoy?

I've been painting and sketching since childhood—something my dad introduced me to early on. Over the years, I've worked in watercolors and acrylics, and more recently I've begun experimenting with oils. Painting allows me to slow down, observe, and reflect, which I find deeply fulfilling.

Gardening is another passion I've carried since I was 12 years old. Today, I maintain a quarter-acre French-inspired kitchen garden at my home, along with a wide variety of flowers. I especially love cultivating heirloom roses. Gardening gives me both a creative outlet and a way to stay grounded in the cycles of nature.

-Interviewed by Michele Yamanaka

-Photos by Susannah Arthur



A view out into my garden

Mind Your Manners: Quick Guide to Japanese Etiquette

Learn what not to do — and what to do instead.

[Mark Kennedy](#)

Sep 28, 2025



In Japan, dedicated slippers are provided for use inside the toilet area; Leave them there (original AI image by author Mark Kennedy)

What's new: Japanese society has shifted since the onset of the pandemic. Locals have become more sensitive to personal space, noise, and hygiene. Add record-breaking tourism to that, and small breaches of etiquette feel amplified.

Why it matters: Japan's culture is based on order, quiet, and mutual respect. Tourists and other visitors who don't adapt risk receiving dagger eyes and fueling local resentment against overtourism.

Where it stands: Japanese people are famously forgiving on the surface. However, behind closed doors or out of earshot, they can be quite critical.

Please familiarize yourself with the following to help you navigate what not to do and how to behave instead:

Mild	Annoyances	(eye-roll level)
Japanese people will think, "Not cool," but they will still tolerate such behavior to a certain extent. Just don't make any of this a habit! The Japanese onomatopoeia for this sort of thing is " <i>iraira</i> " (イライラ), meaning "to be irritated." Your Japanese friends and colleagues will consider such behavior <i>chotto meiwaku</i> (ちょっと迷惑), meaning "slight annoyance."		
• ☹️	Eating while walking or on-board commuter trains	→ Instead: Eat at the designated seating area in a convenience store (<i>konbini</i> ・ コンビニ), bench, or on the bullet train with an <i>ekiben</i> (駅弁), which is a boxed meal sold at train stations.
• ☹️	Talking on phones and using AirPods to make calls aloud in commuter trains and buses	→ Instead: Switch to "manner mode." Use AirPods only for music/podcasts at low volume with no sound leakage. Joining chat-based meetings (Slack, Teams, etc.) is also okay.
	○ Corollary for the bullet train or shinkansen (新幹線):	Step onto the "deck" by the doors for calls.
	○ Corollary for airplanes:	Before takeoff and after landing, the cabin crew will instruct passengers to switch their devices to airplane mode. Voice calls are not allowed. Some airlines offer in-flight Wi-Fi or even "voice call" services during flights, but in Japan, it's still rare. Culturally, people avoid making calls, even if it's technically possible. Airplanes are tight, shared spaces, and Japanese passengers generally extend the same no-phone-call etiquette from trains to planes.
	○ Corollary for long-distance buses:	In short, the answer is "no." The rules on long-distance buses are especially strict because other passengers may be sleeping.
	○ Corollary for taxis:	If it's a private taxi ride, it's usually fine to take a short call on your AirPods — <i>but it's best to ask the driver politely.</i>
• ☹️	Public displays of affection (PDA)	→ Instead: Hold hands or link arms; save kissing/hugging for private spaces.

Strong Offenses (silent disapproval)

These behaviors are likely to prompt the response, “You don’t ‘get’ Japan.”

- ⑤ **Cutting in line** → Instead: Queue patiently; locals respect visible order.
 - *Historical note*: Cutting in line is considered rude, selfish, and disruptive to Japan’s prized sense of order. Stand patiently in line. The Japanese will respect you for following this unwritten rule. Unfortunately, visitors from China, the country that sends the most tourists every year, are associated with this issue due to some cultural baggage. Thanks to extensive etiquette campaigns by the Chinese government and travel agencies, younger, independent Chinese tourists are no longer blamed for this tendency. However, many Japanese people still remember the pushy behavior, loud voices, and aggressive shopping habits of Chinese group tours from around 15 to 20 years ago. At the time, the Japanese media ran many stories about *mana ihan* (マナー違反), which translates to “manner violations.” Locals still cringe at queue-jumping, loudness, and crowding. There is a mix of gratitude for the money they spend and resentment for their manners. After all, Chinese visitors account for the largest number of overseas visitors, and they tend to spend the most on shopping, hotels, and luxury goods. Thus, the tourism industry welcomes them.
- ⑤ **Improper chopstick use (stabbing, pointing, passing food tip-to-tip)** → Instead: Rest chopsticks on the holder; use serving spoons or flip chopsticks to the blunt end for shared dishes. If unsure, copy what locals do.
- ⑤ **Eating/drinking and talking loudly at shrines or temples** → Instead: Speak quietly, dress modestly, bow at the *torii* gate, and follow purification rituals.
- ⑤ **Sloppy clothing in sacred/formal spaces** → Instead: Wear tidy jeans & T-shirt, or smart casual; avoid overly revealing/dirty clothes. Clothing with offensive slogans or images should be avoided.
 - *Corollary for festivals*: Locals often wear light robes called *yukata* (浴衣), “happi” coats, or casual clothing. Foreigners are encouraged to wear a *yukata* during festivals.

Deep Disgust (serious No-No)

While rare, someone offended by your actions may call you out in public. Alternatively, they may file a formal complaint with a staff member, such as at a restaurant, which could result in a formal reprimand from the proprietor.

- ⑥ **Not covering mouth when coughing/sneezing** → Instead: Wear a mask, use a tissue, or sneeze into your elbow and say, “Excuse me” or *sumimasen* (すみません) in Japanese.
 - *Historical note about masks*: Due to my foreign roots, I will probably never fully adjust to Japan’s culture of mask-wearing. Over here, masks are not just about health; they’re also about politeness, harmony, and personal space. For many, wearing a mask feels natural, almost like carrying an umbrella when it rains. Mask-wearing in Japan predates the pandemic by decades. It is rooted in habits like protecting against pollen allergies, preventing the spread of colds, and guarding against yellow dust that blows in from China’s Gobi Desert at certain times of the year. Masks also serve cultural roles tied to cleanliness, thoughtfulness, privacy, and fashion. During the pandemic, masks became nearly universal due to strong social pressure, with compliance rates exceeding 90%. Today, while the government has made mask-wearing voluntary, many Japanese people, especially older individuals and service workers, still wear masks indoors, on trains, in shops, and in hospitals, while younger generations are more likely to go without masks. Importantly, wearing a mask in Japan is not considered antisocial, but rather a polite and considerate gesture, a natural extension of the country’s broader culture focused on hygiene and harmony.
- ⑥ **Drunken misbehavior (vomiting, harassing staff)** → Instead: Drink while eating (maybe have a reserve of water), pace yourself, and leave before you lose control.
 - *Context*: While not quite a double standard, Japan has the concept of “*nomination*” (飲みニケーション), a portmanteau of the English word “communication” and the Japanese verb “to drink,” *nomu* (飲む). It means bonding through alcohol. Thus, being tipsy lowers social barriers, and mild misbehavior is overlooked because it’s seen as contributing to group harmony. Salarymen stumbling home after a Friday night drinking party is still a familiar sight. Sleeping on the last train—even *snoring loudly*—is forgiven as part of working life. There is extra tolerance for rowdiness, karaoke shouting, or falling asleep at the table, especially during year-end parties, called *bonenkai* (忘年会), which means “forget the year party” in Japanese. During festivals, drinking in public is normal, and people are more forgiving. However, there is an unspoken contract that you are expected to behave properly the next day and show humility.

- Vomiting in public, harassing staff or strangers, fighting, or being so disruptive that you disturb others' sense of safety crosses the line from being a "funny drunk" (*horoyoi* ・ ぼろ酔い) to an "annoying drunk." Therefore, note that drunken misbehavior is sometimes allowed in Japan, especially on Friday nights or at parties, but only within limits. The moment you cause a real disturbance or disgust (e.g., vomiting, groping, or aggressive shouting), the tolerance vanishes.
- 🚫 **Wearing shoes indoors or misusing toilet slippers** → Instead: Remove shoes at the entrance to a home or office which is called *genkan* (玄関) in Japanese, neatly place your shoes facing outward (pointed toward the door to the outside), and use the correct slippers inside.
 - *What's that about "toilet slippers?"* In Japanese homes, *ryokan* or *minshuku* inns, and some traditional restaurants and temples, the floors are kept scrupulously clean. Toilets are considered unclean areas. To prevent germs from "escaping," dedicated slippers are provided inside the toilet area only. Remove your regular slippers (or socks, if you are barefoot) at the bathroom entrance. Put on the toilet slippers. Do your business. Leave the toilet slippers inside the bathroom. Then, switch back to your regular indoor slippers. Walking around the house in toilet slippers is one of the fastest ways to trigger silent horror. It's similar to tracking dirt across a *tatami* room, which is seen as unclean, inconsiderate, and gross.
- 🚫 **Poor hygiene at a hot spring (*onsen* ・ 温泉) or public bath (*sento* ・ 銭湯)** → Instead: Wash thoroughly before entering, tie back hair, scoop out stray hairs, and keep water clean.
 - *Additional note:* Smelling unwashed and entering an *onsen* or *sento* without scrubbing first is offensive. ***In a country obsessed with cleanliness, this is the ultimate recoil-in-disgust offense.***
 - *Minding stray hairs:* Tie up your long hair (many people bring a towel or hair tie). Remove any stray hair if needed. While this rule applies to everyone, it is particularly sensitive for women in the changing room of a hot spring or public bath. However, there seems to be a lot of "do as I say, not as I do" regarding this practice.
 - *Corollary regarding overfilling bathtubs at home:* Only fill tubs to a normal level. Families often **reuse** bathwater on the same day, so it is expected that they will keep it tidy.






It's not a good look to leave stray hairs in the changing area of a hot spring or public bath (original AI image by author Mark Kennedy)

Honorable Mentions (listed in alphabetical order)

- ⚠️ **Blocking train station gates** → Instead: Step aside before checking phone/map.
- ⚠️ **Blowing nose loudly** → Instead: Sniff quietly or step into a restroom.
 - *Additional note:* This is extremely off-putting. Using a tissue discreetly is acceptable, but honking like a Canadian goose is definitely taboo.
- ⚠️ **Chewing with mouth open/burping loudly** → Instead: Chew quietly; if you burp, cover your mouth and say, "Excuse me," or *sumimasen* (すみません) in Japanese.
- ⚠️ **Eating/drinking in taxis** → Instead: Wait until arrival or ask the driver politely.
- ⚠️ **Improper umbrella manners** → Instead: Use umbrella bags, fold and point tip downward.
 - *Additional note:* Don't bring dripping umbrellas into shops or onto trains without wrapping them. Be careful not to swing them carelessly, as you might hit someone walking behind you.



The umbrella bags at the entrance of shops and supermarkets are there for a reason (original AI image by author Mark Kennedy)

-  **Leaving meals unfinished** → Instead: Take small portions; aim for a clean plate.
-  **Loud public complaining with staff** → Instead: Speak softly, repeat politely, and ask for the manager if needed.
 - *Context:* Japan prizes harmony. Loud complaining, arguing, or showing anger goes against the unspoken rule of not disturbing others. Public image matters. Making a scene draws unwanted attention to everyone—*staff, bystanders, and your companions*. Staff are trained to endure. Service workers are taught to apologize and resolve issues calmly. If a foreigner becomes loud, it is not only unnecessary, but also embarrassing for everyone. People cringe when someone “loses face” in public. Anyone who does so will be viewed as selfish, prioritizing their own feelings over group harmony. Losing your temper in public is associated with a poor upbringing. That said, “customer harassment” has recently become a hot topic in Japan.
 - *Corollary about when it’s okay to complain:* Hotel guests are expected to speak up if something is wrong, but they should do so politely. Staff usually overcompensate to fix any perceived deficiency. If there is a problem at a restaurant, such as a wrong order or billing mistake, quietly pointing it out is completely acceptable. The key is to be conscious of your tone. In the case of a defective product, be aware that Japanese companies welcome product feedback because it aligns with their mindset of continuous improvement. They expect constructive reporting, not confrontation. Don’t loudly criticize an item in a store or get angry with frontline staff, who usually have little control. Whenever possible, bring the defective product in with the receipt. You will usually receive an apology followed by a replacement or refund. Often, you will also receive a small complimentary gift or voucher as an additional gesture of apology. The key is polite persistence.
 - *Corollary about how to respond when you are wronged:* These social norms do not mean that you are expected to simply give in whenever something does not meet your reasonable expectations. Calmly explain the problem and repeat if needed, but keep your voice low. Ask for an escalation politely and quietly. Instead of arguing, say, “Can I speak with your manager?” Also, step aside. Handle disputes away from other customers.
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-  **Not bowing in formal settings** → Instead: Offer even a small nod when greeted or thanked.
 - *Corollary about greeting strangers on the street in big cities:* Passing people on the street without acknowledging them is normal. Eye contact or random greetings can feel awkward or suspicious.
 - *Corollary about greeting strangers in small towns and rural areas:* In villages, in the countryside, and in the mountains, people often greet each other. A slight nod or small bow often accompanies the greeting. This shows friendliness and recognition in less crowded, community-oriented spaces.
 - *Corollary about greeting strangers while hiking.* Similar to hiking culture in the West, it’s common to greet strangers warmly on mountain trails. Failing to say “hello” on a lonely path can make you seem cold or unfriendly.

- ⚠ **Not flushing the toilet after use** → Always flush. Many Japanese toilets have a button that makes a flushing sound. This sound can also be used instead of a “modesty flush.”
- ⚠ **Not removing backpacks on crowded trains** → Instead: Hold it in front or place on overhead shelf.
- ⚠ **Not respecting priority seating** → Instead: Stand up immediately for elderly, pregnant, disabled, or parents with kids.
- ⚠ **Not saying set phrases at meal time** → Instead: Always quietly say “*itadakimasu*” (いただきます) before eating and “*gochisosamadeshita*” (ご馳走様でした) after meals. Those standardized phrases are, more or less, the equivalent of saying grace.
- ⚠ **Not sorting garbage (ゴミ分別)** → Instead: Follow posted signs or bring trash back to your hotel/home.
 - *Additional explanation:* Leaving recyclables, food waste, and plastics mixed together or dumping trash where there are no bins are basic rules for following the local trash sorting rules, or *gomi bunbetsu* (ゴミ分別) in Japanese. Additionally, leaving trash behind has recently become a flashpoint in the ongoing debate about overtourism. Japan has few public bins, yet littering is taboo. So, what are you supposed to do? Bring your trash back home with you or dispose of it at your hotel.
- ⚠ **Overly Direct Eye Contact** → Maintain soft, intermittent eye contact. Smile slightly instead of staring.
- ⚠ **Overpowering perfume/cologne** → Instead: Bathe daily; use subtle scents or none at all.
- ⚠ **Pointing with fingers or feet** → Instead: Gesture with open palm; keep soles flat to the ground.
- ⚠ **Public grooming (nail clipping, nose picking, etc.)** → Instead: Groom privately at home/hotel.
- ⚠ **Public urination** → Instead: Use plentiful free public toilets at stations, parks, and convenience stores (konbini).
- ⚠ **Sitting on the ground in inappropriate spots** → Instead: Find benches, parks, or designated picnic areas.
- ⚠ **Smoking while walking/flicking butts** → Instead: Smoke in designated areas; carry a pocket ashtray.
 - *Warning:* This practice, known as *poi sute* (ポイ捨て) in Japanese, is considered dirty and inconsiderate. It is also dangerous because it can cause fires. Stories about elementary school students getting burned by accidentally tossed cigarette butts while walking to school are still not uncommon. Many cities, such as Tokyo and Kyoto, issue fines for littering. Japanese smokers are expected to use designated smoking areas or carry portable ashtrays. Foreigners who flick cigarette butts onto the ground are seen as rude.
- ⚠ **Standing on the wrong side of escalators** → Instead: Copy locals (Tokyo = stand left, Osaka = stand right).
- ⚠ **Spitting in public** → Instead: Use tissues, masks, or restrooms.
 - *Warning:* Do not spit or hawk a loogie. It is strongly taboo and seen as unhygienic, rude, and unsightly. While a few older men, especially smokers, may do so discreetly, it's rare among the general population and is disapproved of. Foreigners who spit often reinforce stereotypes about being uncouth or dirty. Outside of sports fields, where it is somewhat tolerated, **spitting is never acceptable**. Instead, people are expected to use tissues, handkerchiefs, or restrooms. In a society that prizes cleanliness and order, public spitting provokes an immediate negative reaction.
- ⚠ **Slouching, resting feet on furniture/tatami edges** → Instead: Sit upright; kneel (formal situations) or sit cross-legged (informal situations).
- ⚠ **Talking loudly late at night in hotels/trains** → Instead: Keep voices low; treat shared spaces as quiet zones.
- ⚠ **Tipping money** → Instead: Say thank you sincerely; service already includes everything.

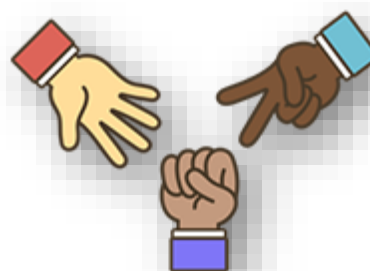
In the post-pandemic era of overtourism, locals are less patient with visitors who disrupt the peace.

Editor: The article continues with a list of behaviors that are now making tourists more unpopular actions like flying drones at shrines, not wearing masks, disrespect at temples, eating in the wrong places, etc. Please go to <https://realgaijin.substack.com/p/mind-your-manners-quick-guide-to> to read the full article and also learn about Mark Kennedy's *Real Gaijin* site.

Bottom line: In Japan, the little things matter. Overtourism after the pandemic makes locals less patient with visitors who disturb the peace. Copy your Japanese hosts and follow their cues, and you'll earn their genuine appreciation.

JANKEN

By Michele Yamanaka



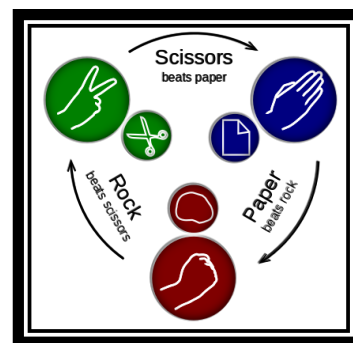
You probably have played this game, commonly referred to as Jan Ken Pon, although you may know it as Rock Paper Scissors, but how much do you know about it?

While this is a simple child's game in America, in Japan it is used by adults and children to settle disagreements, make choices and determine the order of doing something. If there is a difference of opinion about something, Janken allows people to decide without embarrassment. Japanese children may play Janken many times every day. It is a staple of everyday life. There are also various forms of Janken in Japan, with variations of the phrases and hand movements, but the rules are the same.

"The good news is that the rules and gestures are the same as in English. Rock beats scissors, scissors beats paper, paper beats rock. Rock is called "Guu" (ぐう?). Scissors is called "Choki" (ちょき?). Paper is called "Paa" (ぱあ?).

Procedure

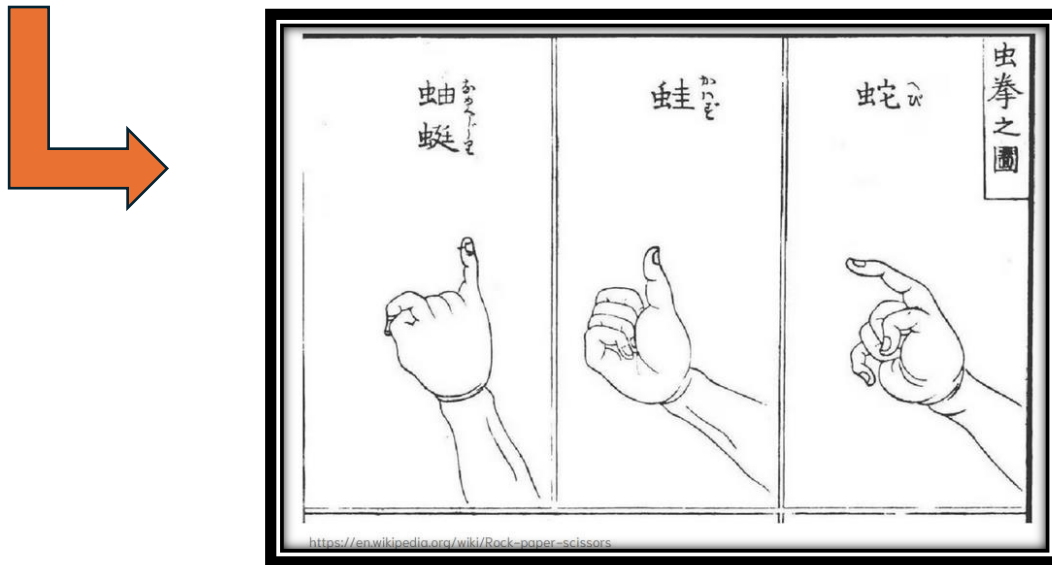
- Players start by chanting together "Saisho wa guu" (最初はぐう?) (Starting with stone) and pump their fists in time.
- This is quickly followed by "Janken pon!" (じゃん拳ぽん!), and on "pon" both players show their hands in front of them, displaying "Guu", "Choki" or "Paa".
- If there is a draw, both players chant "Aiko desho!" (あいこでしょ!), and on the "sho!" both players show their hands again.”¹



But where did this game originate? What is its history?

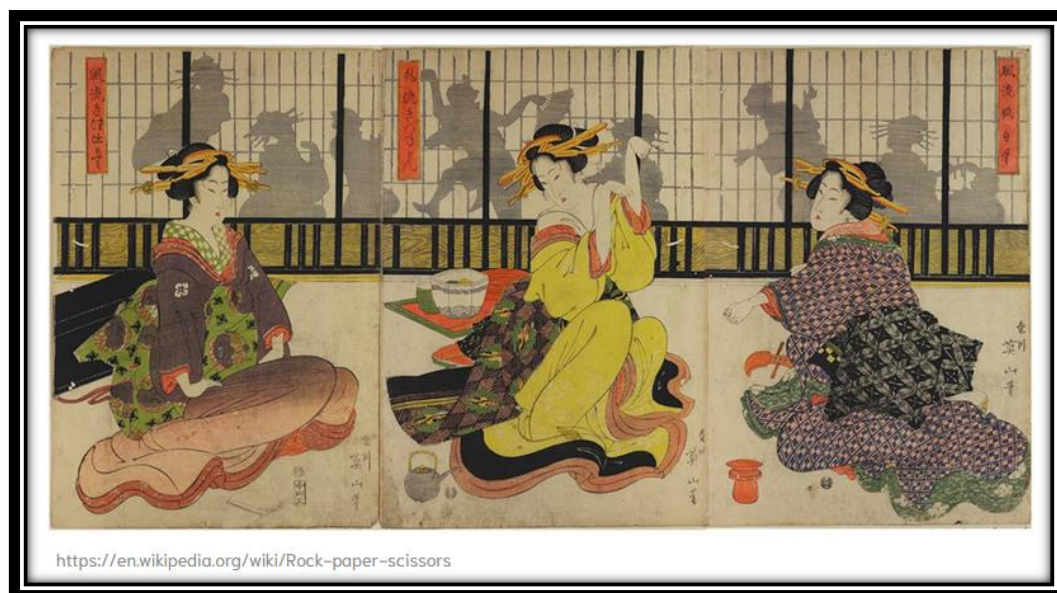
Although commonly thought to have originated in Japan, the first mention of a game like Jan Ken Pon is found in a book written during the Ming dynasty in China by Xie Zhaozhi. He calls the game *shoushiling* and dates it as beginning during the Chinese Han dynasty (206 BC-220AD). Thus, this game is close to 2000 years old.

It was introduced into Japan in the 17th century in its Chinese form *mushiken* in which players used 3 gestures: a snail (left), a frog (middle) or a snake (right).



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock-paper-scissors>

In Japan it evolved into a form called *kitsune-ken* with similar rules. Here is an image showing 3 women playing the fox (*kitsune*) version of the game.



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock-paper-scissors>

The variations of the game in Japan were referred to as *sansukumi-ken* (“three are afraid of one another”). Three hand gestures were always used regardless of the variations.

The most popular version which is known as Jan Ken Pon (or just Janken) (Rock Paper Scissors) developed in Japan during the late Edo and early Meiji periods (late 19th century).

As Japan and the West increased contact, Janken found its way into the western countries, and Rock Paper Scissors began being played in the early 20th century in America and other English-speaking countries. Newspaper articles in 1921 in the *Washington Herald* and the *Sydney Morning Herald* wrote about it. In England in 1924, a letter to the Editor described a game called “zot” being played in Mediterranean ports which was very similar. A children’s magazine in France in 1927 describes a Japanese game with 3 gestures.

This popular game with players all over the world has attracted mind game studies and competition on strategies. There are now pro players and worldwide competitions, national leagues, and cash prizes. One of the best-known professional Rock paper Scissors players is Jason Simmons, who goes by the name of Master Roshambollah.

Scientists could not resist the challenge of finding a way to predict moves and remove randomness. In 2012, researchers from the University of Tokyo produced a robot named Janken able of winning a game of Jan Ken Pon 100% of the time. Then, in 2013, another group of scientists at the Ishikawa Oku Laboratory invented a second version of a Jan Ken Pon-winning robot.

Jan Ken Pon, or whatever you want to call it, has continued in some form for 2 millennia through many cultures and historical periods, yet has kept a similar form and function. Next time you play Jan Ken Pon or Rock Paper Scissors, remember you are playing with a part of history.

Sources:

- <https://jet.fandom.com/wiki/Janken> (1)
- <https://cotoacademy.com/how-to-play-rock-scissors-paper-in-japanese-janken-scissors-papaper-stone-japanese/>
- <https://allabout-japan.com/en/article/3713/>
- <https://www.annarahmanan.com/the-history-of-rock-paper-scissors-game>
- <https://www.nihonsun.com/get-your-way-with-jan-ken-pon/>

2025 年 9 月 28 日(日)、フォートウェインの日系企業から 20 名の腕前も様々なゴルファーが集まり、午前 8 時よりゴルフを楽しみました。会場はチェスナットヒルズ・ゴルフコースでした。幹事の SEAVAC 樋田さんと、地元のアメリカ人のクリスさんが、このイベントの企画・運営を行いました。

参加者は、NISCO、Key Fasteners、SEAVAC USA、Univertical、FCC、C&A、Essex Solutions などから集まりました。JAAI はホールのひとつに 50 ドル分のギフトカードを寄付しました。JAAI 次期会長のミシェル・ヤマナカ様も表彰式に出席され、見事そのギフトカードを獲得された椎名さんに直接贈呈しました。椎名さんは同時にグロス第 1 位の受賞者でもありました。ネットスコアでの優勝者は、代理参加者で NISCO ミシガンオフィスの吉岡さんでした。

2026 年のゴルフコンペの幹事は、NISCO の益国さんと岩原さんが務められます。



集合写真



授賞式の様子



椎名さんとミッシェル会長

JAPANESE COMPANY GOLF OUTING – September 28, 2025

On a beautiful autumn morning (9/28/25), 20 golfers of varying skill gathered to play golf starting at 8 am. The location was Chestnut Hills Golf Club. Organizers Toida-san and Chris-san did an excellent job in arranging for this outing. There were golfers from Nishikawa Cooper, Key Fasteners, SEAVACUSA, Univertical, FCC, C & A, Essex Solutions and others. JAAI donated a \$50 gift card for one of the holes and Michele Yamanaka, JAAI President-elect, was also at the awards ceremony to present the gift card to the winner Shiina-san, who was also the best gross #1 winner. The Net winner was Yoshioka-san from the NISCO Michigan office, substituting for one of the FCC players.

The 2026 golf Outing organizers will be Masukuni-san and Iwahara-san, both of Nishikawa Cooper.



Group photo by Imoto



Awards ceremony -photo by Imoto



Shiina-san and Michele Yamanaka-photo by Imoto

EVENTS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

ANIME DRAWING WINNERS From the May 18 Cherry Blossom Festival

The May 18 Anime Drawing Contest was run this year by new people who experienced a lot of learning curves. They did not realize that they should have scanned the drawings of all the winners before allowing the artists to take home their entries. For that reason, we can only show the two drawings that were selected for the 2026 Cherry Blossom Festival for the poster and the T-shirts.

Here are the official winners by name:

Sakura Imoto
 Tessa Hoffman
 Viola Chupulis (? Not sure on last name spelling)
 Amy Lu-T-shirt design
 Alia Villabbas
 Jessica Medellin
 Aaron Gong
 Scarlet Lopez Sasa
 Lily Martinez
 Easter Thin -Poster design
 Ace Cantrell
 Rebecca Burns (Nala)
 Arianna Spaulding
 Eric Warr
 Kait Jones
 Eleanor Dunn
 Audrey Hockemeyer
 Kyle Beauchamp
 Matthew Griffith
 Franklin Gourdin (? Not sure on last name spelling)
 Oliver Metzger
 Grace Jardiolin
 Gian Jardiolin
 Bob Marley Vangorder
 Sarah Pate
 Emily Hobaugh
 Rajah (illegible last name)
 Hannah Luther



By Amy Lu



by Easter Thin

2025 Taste of Sister Cities Gala: Recap-Aug. 18

Five countries, one night, one location.

What an unforgettable evening at the Taste of Sister Cities Gala! The evening was filled with incredible food from our four sister cities and one friendship city, inspiring speakers, vibrant cultural performances, and a lively auction!

A Celebration of Global Culture: Guests enjoyed a one-of-a-kind culinary experience inspired by the cuisines of FWSCI's sister and friendship cities:

- Takaoka, Japan
- Plock, Poland
- Gera, Germany
- Taizhou, China
- Mawlamyine, Myanmar



The night was filled with lively entertainment, including performances by the Tanzer Youth Dance troupe, Burmese and Chinese cultural groups, and more. These performances showcased the vibrant traditions of our partner cities while celebrating Fort Wayne's growing role in international friendship.

Inspiring Words and Stories: Throughout the evening, guests heard powerful messages about the importance of global connection. Mayor Sharon Tucker, Fort Wayne Fire Chief Eric Lahey, and Tom Herr shared their perspectives on how citizen diplomacy and cultural exchange strengthen our community. FWSCI's Student Ambassadors also took the stage, offering moving testimonials about their experiences abroad and the life-changing opportunities these programs provide.

They were able to reach and surpass their goal of \$30,000-more than \$32,000 was raised. All the above was taken from the FWSCI website. For more info, please see

<https://www.fortwaynesistercities.net/stories/2025-taste-of-sister-cities-gala-recap>. FWSCI welcomes your involvement.

Japanese American Community Picnic – Sept. 6

The 2025 Japanese American Community Picnic was held at the Japanese Pavilion in Swinney Park West. It was a pleasant day and 46 people participated.

We enjoyed lots of traditional Japanese food and some traditional American food too. (Thank you, Ryan for grilling all those hot dogs!) We especially want to thank the Miyabi Restaurant (Georgetown Shopping Center) for their donation of food: Lo Mein Chicken, Chicken Fried Rice, Crab Rangoon and spring roll appetizers, and sushi rolls (crab Rangoon, Yummy rolls, shrimp tempura, spicy California, spicy tuna) -all delicious.



This was a family event and featured a favorite summer festival game called “Yo-Yo Water Balloon”. The child uses a hook tied with paper to try to remove a balloon from the water before the paper breaks.



Another favorite Japanese summer activity is the MELON BASH. Just like it sounds, people are blindfolded, handed a stick, and try to bash open a watermelon. One young man gave such a powerful swing that the stick broke! Terry O’Brien supervised this.



There was also a putting contest with both youth and adult winners. Carol Wilhems did a great job of running this contest.



Putting champs

One final game was a more American game – Bingo. Its popularity crosses international borders.



Here are some photos of the picnic event. If you attended, see if you can find your photo in one of these.



We definitely had a great time!

JAAI at the Sept. 27 Science Central Sci-Fi Event

Terry O'Brien and Brian Scherschel represented JAAI at the Sci-fi Science Central event to make the public aware of the Japanese American Association and the Cherry Blossom Festival, which it sponsors yearly.



2025 FORT WAYNE CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL COSPLAY WINNERS

(The July Nippon Quarterly listed the winners by name, but their photos were not yet available. Here are the winners again with photos. PhooOs by Jerry Etnier.)



1st Place: Tracey Canfield as "Geisha Poison Ivy" from "DC Comics"



2nd Place: Savana Fink as "Shadow the Hedgehog" from "Sonic the Hedgehog"



3rd Place: Matthew and Kait as "Ken Kanecki and Touka Kirishima" from "Tokyo Ghoul"



4th Place: Caitlin Benson as "Maomao" from "Apothecary Diaries"



5th Place: Jessica S-M as "Sailor Moon" from "Sailor Moon / Pretty Guardian"



Honorable Mentions:

- Kai as "Jinx", from the animated series Arcane based on the video game "League of Legends"
- Taylor Royse as "Midna, Summer Stylin' Version" from "Zelda, Twilight Princess"
- Noah as "Atsushi, the Beast Beneath the Moonlight" from "Bungo Stray Dogs"
- Wu Talanames as "Misa Amane" from "Death Note"
- Jason V as "Trafalgar D. Law" from "One Piece"
- Viktor as "Osamu Dazai" from "Bungo Stray Dogs"
- Oliver, Mykell and Rower as "Silver, Knuckles, and Shadow" from "Sonic the Hedgehog"
- Taylor Golden as "Princess Zelda" from "The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess"
- Han as "Miles 'Tails' Prower" from "Sonic the Hedgehog"
- Nico as "Hatsune Miku" from "Vocaloid"
- Kallen Fitzgerald as "Saitama" from "One Punch Man"
- Crona as "Apprentice Geisha Harley Quinn" from "DC Comics"



ALL COSPLAY ENTRANTS

COMING EVENTS

-21

Man'Yo Festival – Oct. 3-Oct. 5

The [Takaoka Manyō Festival](#) in Takaoka, Japan, is a cultural event where all 4,516 poems from the 20 volumes of the Man'yōshū, the oldest Japanese anthology, are recited in a relay format over three days and nights on a special floating stage at Takaoka Kojō Park. The festival aims to connect with the rich legacy of Manyō romance, featuring on-site recitations, period costume rentals, and broadcasting of video recitations at night on local TV and YouTube, along with other events like food stalls and performing arts.



Man'yo Festival stage in Takaoka

As the Sister City to Takaoka, Fort Wayne was given 10 of these poems and 10 volunteers from the Japanese American community video recorded one poem each.

The video recordings will Premiere on **Friday, 3 October 2025**, via the Takaoka Manyo Festival YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/live/9MH1XqzS9Bw?si=VNOU9WW-F8uJ3iRt> . The Fort Wayne section of the Man'Yoshu readings will be aired October 4th at 7:11am.

More information about this festival: <https://www.iwafu.com/en/events/1024977>

SAVORY JAPANESE BEEF SOBORO -
October 15, 6 pm- 8 pm



Join us for a delicious dive into Japanese home cooking! Learn how to create this flavorful and comforting dish featuring finely ground beef, eggs, flavorful seasonings and fluffy rice. This dish is quick and delicious and can be easily customized with other proteins or vegetarian alternatives. Come hungry and bring a container for leftovers! Ages 16+. Instructor: Suzi Hanzel. Registration deadline: 10/8.

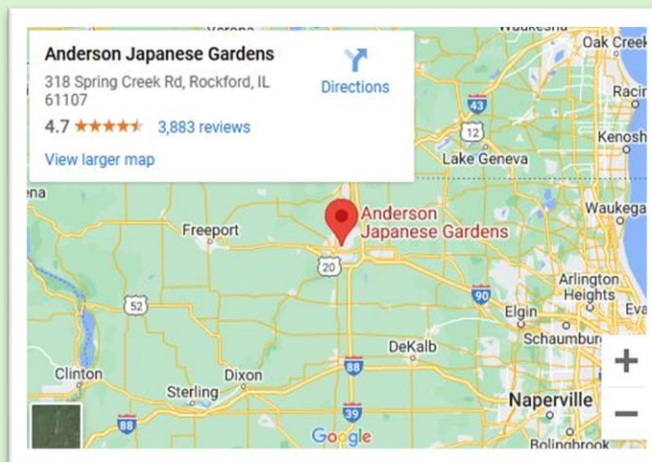
Cost: \$45.

Location: Salomon Farm Park Learning Center,
817 W. Dupont Rd.

Register on-line at www.fortwayneparks.org
or phone 427-6000.

Anderson Japanese Gardens

318 Spring Creek Rd
Rockford, IL 61107



Note: All photos and information are from the Anderson Japanese Gardens website or Creative Commons.

Lecture Series

7:00 PM Lecture | Members – Free | Non-Members \$5 | Pre-Registration Required | To register: <https://52957.blackbaudhosting.com/52957/2025-Lecture-Series-16Oct2025>

Thursday, October 16th



An Introduction to Gyotaku

Robert Chenoweth, Founder of The Gyotaku & Founder of The PaperFin Inkless Fish Printing

Robert Chenoweth is a Gyotaku instructor at the Japanese Culture Center in Chicago, IL, where he is dedicated to preserving and innovating the traditional Japanese art of fish printing. As a keynote speaker, he shares his expertise on both Gyotaku and the global art market. In addition to his work as an educator and speaker, Robert is an avid art collector and dealer with a passion for connecting people to unique and meaningful works.

He also blended his passion for Gyotaku with his experience as an angler to create **PaperFin** – a modern, mess-free approach to fish printing. The **PaperFin Inkless Fish Printing Kits** are designed to make Gyotaku more accessible to beginners, educators, and families by eliminating the need for traditional inks and studio setups.



NOV. 1

To register:

<https://52957.blackbaudhosting.com/52957/Moon-Viewing-Tea-Ceremony-01Nov2025>

Location: Anderson Japanese Gardens

Information and photos from the Anderson Japanese Gardens website.

Moon Viewing Tea and Ikebana

Saturday, November 1 | 6:00 PM- 8:00 PM | Pavilion
\$40 Members | \$45 Non-Members

Step into the still beauty of an autumn night and celebrate **Tsukimi, Japan's cherished moon-viewing tradition**. On Saturday, November 1, from 6:00–8:00 PM, the Pavilion will come alive with flowers, tea, and music beneath the glow of the autumnal full moon.

The evening begins with an Ikebana exhibition by the **AJG Ikebana group**, followed by **Reiko Takahashi creating "Tatehana,"** the oldest style of the Ikenobo Ikebana School, as an offering to the moon. **Kimiko Gunji, Professor Emeritus at the University of Illinois, will then perform the Kencha tea ceremony,** serving tea and delicate sweets to guests.

Also, enjoy the soothing notes of the **Shakuhachi flute performed by Omar Francis,** an unforgettable soundtrack to a moonlit night.

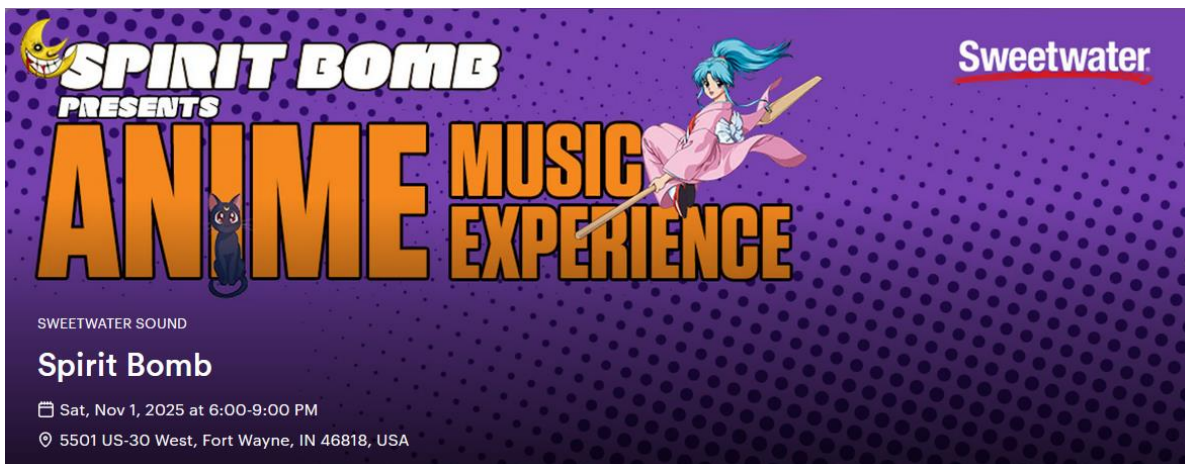
Guests meet at the Visitor Center by 5:45 PM to be escorted to the Pavilion. This event is held outdoors—please dress for the weather.

— — — — —

Dragon in the Cherry Blossom Festival



NOVEMBER 1, 6 PM-9 PM



Join Japanese Anime cover band **Spirit Bomb** for an authentic live experience of over 80 songs and themes from popular shows. Taking inspiration from Goku's Genki Dama, **Spirit Bomb** gathers power from all the great anime music in existence to coalesce into an explosive live performance. Show off your favorite Cosplay costume and jump into the fun!

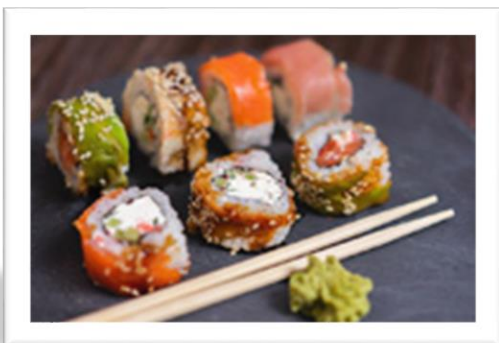
Tickets start at \$20. To buy tickets or more details:

<https://www.universe.com/events/spirit-bomb-tickets-JG48NY>

Location: **Sweetwater Sound, 5501 US-30 West, Fort Wayne, IN 46818, USA**



SUSHI MADE SIMPLE – Nov. 5, 1-3 pm or 6-8 pm



Discover how fun and easy it is to make your own sushi – all vegetarian or with meat! Once you learn the basic process, you'll be amazed at how easy it is to make our own creations. Ages 16+. Instructor: Suzi Hanzel. Registration deadline: 10/29.

Cost: \$45.

Location: Salomon Farm Park Learning Center, 817 W. Dupont Rd.

Register on-line at www.fortwayneparks.org or phone 427-6000.

-Information from Fun Times, Fall 2025

NOVEMBER 8TH & 9TH



The Historic Ireichō is coming to JASC on November 8th and 9th, 2025!

JASC is honored to serve as the Chicago host of the Ireichō ("The Book of Names") on its national tour during 2025 and 2026. The Ireichō is a book monument with the names of the individuals of Japanese ancestry incarcerated during WWII. Named after the Japanese term for "consoling the spirits," the monument honors those who have gone before us as well as those who carry on the memories and legacies of forced removal, unjust incarceration, and family separation. Every visitor to the monument is invited to contribute to the creation of the monument by marking one or more names in the Ireichō with a blue hanko stamp.

The book started a national tour yesterday on the Day of Remembrance in Washington DC. JASC will host the Chicago tour dates in partnership with JACL Chicago, Chicago Japanese American Historical Society, and Japanese Mutual Aid Society of Chicago.

Visit [Ireizo's website](https://ireizo.org/tour/) (<https://ireizo.org/tour/>) for more information on this project and [register here](#).

This information and photo is from an email from the Japanese American Service Center in Chicago on Feb. 19.

KABLAM!: The Impact of Cartoons and Comics on Art

December 6, 2025 - February 15, 2026.

Fort Wayne Museum of Art

Cartoons and comics and book and strip form are an integral part of childhood and for many continue to fascinate as adults. Artists look at this popular art form for inspiration, embracing its eye-catching style, color, composition, and storytelling methods. This exhibition features works by Enrique Chagoya, Crash, Roy Lichtenstein, Richard Mock, Diego Romero, Cara Romero, and Roger Shimomura, among others.

*Roger Shimomura
American, b. 1939
Kansas Samurai
Lithograph on paper, 2004
Fort Wayne Museum of Art
Purchase with funds provided by the
American Art Initiative Capital Campaign,
2013.37*



More on Roger Shimomura: <https://fwmoa.blog/2019/05/27/treasures-from-the-vault-roger-shimomura/>. Information and photo courtesy of Fort Wayne Museum of Art via Sachi Yanari Rizzo



フォートウェイン日本語補習授業校 PFW Japanese Saturday School

日本語クラス Japanese conversation class

Spring A	January 10, 2026 - March 28, 2026
Spring B	April 4, 2026 - June 27, 2026

時間 Class hours

Introduction	8:45 AM - 10:15 AM
Beginner I	9:00 AM - 10:30 AM
Beginner II	10:30 AM - 12:20 PM
Beginner III	12:30 PM - 2:00 PM

補習校・詳細については、お問い合わせ
合わせください。

For more details, please contact us.



-Kei Quinn, JSS Principal

PEOPLE

WELCOME:

Naoto Hatori (Key Fasteners)
Nanako Katakiri & Christian Caldwell

GOOD-BYE:

Akira Yachidate (Key Fasteners)

CONGRATULATIONS:

William A. and Ayumi Chittenden IV on the birth of their son, William A. Chittenden V

Please email me with your news so I can share it. Company achievements and recognitions are also welcome.

Submissions should be emailed to yamanakam@cs.com, with "People" in the subject line. They will be included in the next quarterly newsletter. Categories are:

- Welcome (new to the area)
- Good-bye (leaving area)
- Births/deaths
- Marriage
- Special awards or accomplishments

If you are submitting information about someone else, be sure to have their permission.

This is a community newsletter. We need your input for it to be useful.

掲載ご希望の方は、件名を"People"とし yamanakam@cs.com までメールを下さい。次号のニュースレターへ掲載します。以下のカテゴリーでお願い致します。

- ようこそ（このエリアに新しく来られた方）
- さようなら（このエリアから離れる方）
- 誕生 / 訃報
- ご結婚
- 特別賞または功績

情報をご提供される場合には、ご本人に掲載の同意を得たうえでご提供くださいますよう、お願い致します。

本新聞は地域のニュースレターです。ご意見・ご感想・情報があればぜひお聞かせください。

NIPPON QUARTERLY

Everything Japanese in the Fort Wayne Area

Editor – Michele Yamanaka

yamanakam@cs.com

ニッポン・クォーターリー

～フォートウェインエリアの日本の全て～

編集ーミッシェル・ヤマナカ

yamanakam@cs.com

Contributing authors for this issue / 寄稿者（敬称略）:

- Interview with FWSCI Takaoka Chair – Susannah Arthur
 - Mind Your manners – Mark Kennedy
 - Janken - Michele Yamanaka
- Japanese American Community Picnic – Michele Yamanaka
- Kablam – Fort Wayne Museum of Art via Sachi Yanari Rizzo

Thank you to Masahiro Imoto for translation help.

Deadline for articles to be submitted	Publication date
December 31	Mid January
March 31	Mid April
June 30	Mid July
September 30	Mid October

We hope to have reports/articles from all segments of the Japanese – American community in order to connect us for good communication, provide better cultural understanding, and support each other.

The format of this newsletter is still developing. We welcome suggestions.

If you learn of cultural events of interest to the Japanese community, e.g., a Japanese language movie, an Ikebana workshop, a Japanese dance performance, etc., please email Michele so they can be included in the next newsletter.

If you do not want to receive this newsletter, please email Michele Yamanaka to remove your name from our email list.

記事提出の期限	発行日
12月31日	翌1月中旬
3月31日	4月中旬
6月30日	7月中旬
9月30日	10月中旬

JAAI は日本とアメリカと相互の文化を幅広く日米のコミュニティーへ広める為、様々なレポートや記事の提供をお願いしております。

また本新聞につきましては、改善を心掛けて行きますので、ご提案やアイデアなどありましたら是非ご連絡下さい。

また、もし日本に関するイベントなどがありましたら、次号へ掲載しますのでミッシェルまでご連絡を宜しくお願い致します。

今後配信をご希望されない方は、お手数ですがミッシェルまでご連絡を宜しくお願い申し上げます。

Kei Quinn at Tea Ceremony

