



JSA's *Go Blue* Newsletter

October 2022 Edition



MJSA CONFERENCE

By Abby Sypniewski

This year, we hosted the annual Midwestern Japan Student Association (MJSA) conference! The theme was '開花 - Blossoming' , and we were able to meet many new friends from schools like Michigan State, Purdue, and Indiana University.

The conference included cultural and professional seminars, and a wagashi workshop. We also ventured around Ann Arbor for lunch. " It was an overall good experience getting to know people from other JSAs!" says **Jubilee Wang** about the day.

It's always a fun and enriching experience being able to meet with JSA members from other schools, and we are so glad we could show off our members and campus this year.

Thank you to everyone who joined us, we hope you had as much fun as we did!

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GAME NIGHT

By Abby Sypniewski

Our members joined us for a night of friendly competition!

With games such as Poker, MarioKart, Uno, and more, there was plenty of fun to be had all around.



PUMPKIN DECORATING

By Abby Sypniewski

To celebrate Halloween weekend we decorated pumpkins, listened to some fall tunes, and enjoyed apple cider! Check out some of our award-winning pumpkins on the left made by Chris, Ann, and Laila~

KAZOKU RECAP

By Abby Sypniewski

This month, we had our final Meet The Bigs Speed-Dating event, which involved lots of fun questions and debates!

We also kicked off the program by officially revealing the kazoku matchings and sending everyone off for a scavenger hunt around campus. "It was really great getting to explore campus with the upperclassmen in my kazoku, which is obviously the best. We had so much fun!" says **James Choi**.



HUMANS OF JSA

By Anna Shinohara

Welcome back to Humans of JSA! I hope you are all doing well after midterms season! In this section, we introduce JSA members, both seasoned and new! Reach out to them at an event! Happy reading :))

Demitri Pilger

Anna: Hi Demitri! Tell us about you and some of your interests!

Demitri: Hello! I'm a senior majoring in Computer Science from Bloomfield Hills, MI. One of my interests is playing piano!

Anna: Ooo really! I've always wanted to get back into piano... How did you get into it?

Demitri: Well, I had a piano at home and I would play random notes thinking "I'm Beethoven right now" haha but I always gravitated towards it. I actually compose a little too!

Anna: Wait, that's so cool, what kind of music do you write?

Demitri: I do video game music and some orchestral stuff! The issue is, though, that I tend to start writing my good ideas, and then I stop and never go back because I don't want to be disappointed with the result... I only finish when there's a deadline...

Anna: Aw whaaat... You should start a Spotify with your music!!

Demitri: Actually... There are YouTube videos out there with my music! **

Anna: Oh really! I gotta go take a listen :) Do you have any other hobbies?

Demitri: Hmm one thing I want to get into is cooking... but I wouldn't want to share my grocery list because it's so bad. You'd look at it and think "Oh yeah this guy is in college."

Anna: oh nooo what do you eat then...

Demitri: The ramen my family sends from Japan is SO GOOD also Trader's Joes? Good frozen stuff. Though part of me feels disappointed to whip out the frozen food.

Anna: Honestly both are amazing - I don't even blame you! One more question with a switch of topics! As a new member, what brought you to JSA? Is there anything you like?

Demitri: I'm half Japanese, but the only exposure to the culture I had was the very few people at school and the occasional visit to Japan. It's nice to talk to people who know more about the culture – I have a strong appreciation for different cultures. I lived in China for 2 years but we would stay in one spot for a while when we moved so I didn't have much exposure to different cultures. In the future, I want to learn how to speak Japanese, but I'm procrastinating right now...

Anna: Maybe before you graduate you'll absorb some from JSA members!

Demitri: Hopefully... Also, have you had the experience of feeling like you need to hide your culture like at lunch when you bring out your bento? I like how when I'm in a place like JSA, I don't have to feel that way!

Anna: I know many people can relate to this, and I'm glad that JSA can be a place where you can appreciate your background :)) Thank you for telling us about you!

**Author's note: Ask Demitri about his music if you want to listen!!



HUMANS OF JSA

Lili Shibata

Anna: Hey Lili! Would you be able to introduce yourself?

Lili: Yes! Hi everyone! My name is Lili, and I am a Junior studying International Studies with a business minor! I'm originally from Plano, TX, but now I live in Novi, MI.

Anna: Plano – What is it like there?

Lili: Well there's a lot of Japanese restaurants there so I feel like I missed out and we moved at the wrong time... I lived there for 10 years and I like the warmer weather better. The Michigan cold is a struggle so I'm still getting used to it after 10 years here!

Anna: Do you want to go back in the future?

Lili: Hmmm I think I want to live in Japan! Probably somewhere with a big city and nature. But actually, I also like the beach!!

Anna: You want it all – That might be hard to do! Why Japan?

Lili: First, the food :) Second, when we used to go over the summer, it always felt... different than living in America. I don't know how to put it in words but the air feels clean and the water is clean too. And third, the food!!

Anna: I'm seeing a common food theme here - definitely agree tho ^-^ Switching topics a bit, are you in any other organizations, or have any other hobbies?

Lili: I'm also in VeryUs, which is an Asian interest dance group that seeks to represent the underrepresented Asian community. For example, we dance to Japanese and Chinese music, and this semester, we're dancing to Malaysian music!

Anna: That is so cool you dance to such a diverse range of music!

Lili: Yes hehe :) One of my other hobbies is to sing when I have free time or I'm alone.

Anna: What kind of music do you like?

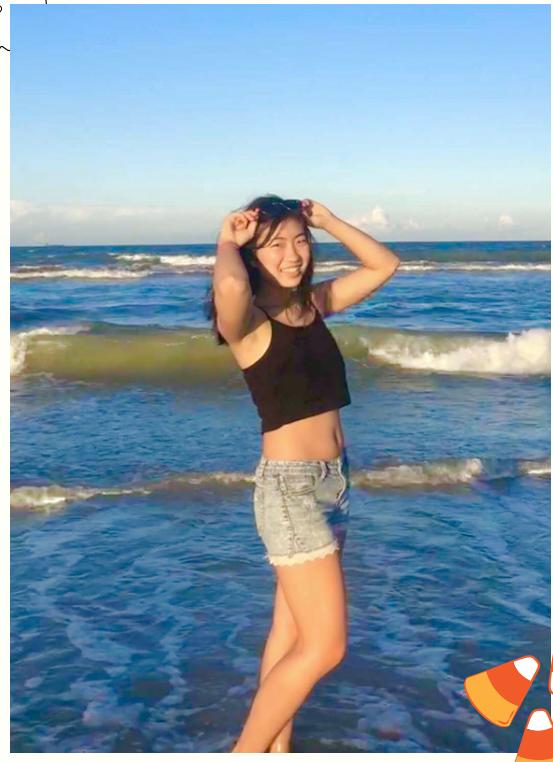
Lili: Mostly Japanese music, but I like Korean songs too. I use everyone else's playlists, so I never know English songs because it's a random playlist I find. The only playlists I have is a big playlist of all the Japanese music I know.

Anna: What's on repeat right now?

Lili: Right now, I'm listening to Teshima Aoi – She sings Ghibli songs! And a lot of BTS before they go to the military... They won't be back until 2025 as a group, so I need to listen to them before they leave... I'm sad

Anna: Aw noooo gotta get a good dose of BTS before they go... :((One last thing, What brought you to JSA?

Lili: I've been in JSA since freshman year! I joined because it is a good opportunity to speak the language and connect with both Japanese speakers and non speakers interested in the culture! I like that I get to learn lots of different cultural backgrounds – like how Japanese culture is different or similar to other cultures, and what people like or want to learn about it!



WHAT'S GOING ON IN JAPAN?

By Nami Kaneko

This section will be updated with the cultural happenings of Japan each month!

In the month of October...



Halloween in Japan



Halloween in Japan is a big deal! In the US, Halloween is more for children; trick or treating and spooky movies are the go-to, but in Japan Halloween is a time to go out and show out. Places like Shibuya in Tokyo hold costume contests for the most elaborate costumes!

Harvest Festivals



October marks the beginning of harvest. All over Japan autumn festivals with seasonal foods celebrate the beginning of seasonal change. Pictured above is the famous Takayama Matsuri in Takayama City in Gifu Prefecture. Other matsuris (or festivals) involve Matsue Suitoro, Asama Onsen Taimatsu Matsuri, and many more!

MISCELLANEOUS!

By Nami Kaneko

This section is the miscellaneous section where I'll include random board recommendations, games, and/or fun facts! It changes every month so stay tuned!

Japanese Spooky Stories

Have you ever heard of Junji Ito? He's a horror mangaka (aka manga writer/artist) perfect for this spooky season! His most famous work is called *Uzumaki* and based off of a psychosis induced by spirals. If you enjoy spooky stuff, I highly recommend any of his manga series, short stories, and their anime short adaptations! You can find a lot of his manga at Vault of Midnight or you can read them like I do through weird tiktok slideshows. His work is pretty spooky so don't say I didn't warn you!





EVENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN NOVEMBER...

- ◆ 11/6 **Celebrasia**
- ◆ 11/11 **TBD**
- ◆ 11/17 **Thanksgiving Bash**
- ◆ 11/20 **Asia's Got Spice**



Don't forget we have Coffee Chats every week!