



## E-NEWSLETTER

### July 2020

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#### **Member Spotlight - NKC of America, Inc.**



NKC of America, Inc. is an automotive conveyor system manufacturer for all major automotive plants - Nissan, Toyota, Honda, Subaru, GM, Ford, and Chrysler. NKC of America was established in Memphis in 1980 as the first overseas subsidiary of the Nakanishi Metal Works from Osaka. The design and manufacturing of automotive conveyor systems started in 1982 with Japanese car manufacturers in Ohio and Tennessee, then began in other states, Canada and Mexico. This year, during its 40th anniversary, NKC has expanded to include 185,000 square feet of manufacturing areas that house a machine shop, fabrication shop, paint shop, and an assembly building.



NKC of America, Inc. was one of the founding members of JAST. For 20 years, NKC has been a major supporter of JAST programs. At the Memphis Japan Festival, NKC staff volunteer at the Edo Tea House with the other members of the Japanese Traders and Manufacturers Association.



John Gorris, always one of the NKC volunteers at the the Memphis Japan Festival, will be retiring on August 1st after 38 years with NKC. John will be staying in Memphis, and we hope that we continue to see him at the Memphis Japan Festival and other JAST events. John is a former JAST Board member, and he has always been very supportive of JAST. Thank you, John!

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Q&A with John S. Gorris

*Vice President*

*JAST Board of Directors Member 2009 - 2018*

*What drew you to NKC of America, Inc. originally?*

NKC was an upcoming conveyor company in the USA with new Japanese technology and new types of conveyor systems. My former boss from a previous company started at NKC, the first American VP, and wanted me to manage the installation of the NKC conveyor system at Nissan in Smyrna, TN. I was overjoyed and started on June 1st, 1982.

*How is your company's involvement with JAST a win-win?*

NKC started with JAST in 2000 and I was a director with JAST for NKC from 2009 to 2018. This was the start of a great relationship for NKC and JAST as it showed us the importance of the collaboration between two countries and how we can benefit from each other. I treasure the opportunity that JAST has brought to me.

*What advice or favorite quote would you share with the Japan-connected community to inspire us during challenging times?*

My favorite quote is "Communication with Team Effort, Yes We Can"

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### **Partner Spotlight - Asian Culture Center of Tennessee**

The Asian Culture Center of Tennessee (ACCT) was formed in 2014 by Kumi Alderman, Executive Director, and three board members to share Asian arts and culture and help build a welcoming community in East Tennessee. The Center offers a variety of educational programs, such as presentations at K-12 schools and senior centers; performances of traditional Japanese arts like kendo, taiko, and shamisen; and Japanese cooking classes. The ACCT also helps with strengthening sister city relations between Knoxville and Muroran City in Hokkaido.

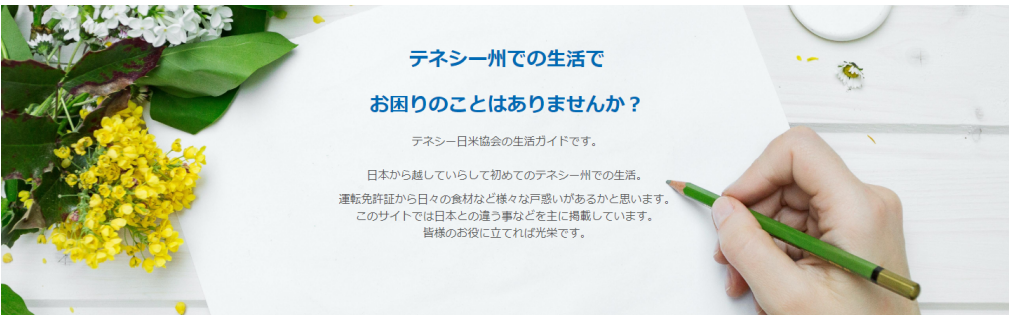
One of the Center's most popular events is the Knox Asian Festival which was started in 2014. Due to great community interest and support, attendance has increased every year. Last year's festival attracted 60,000 guests and included more than 250 booths. Performers represented many Asian nations. According to Visit Knoxville, the Knox Asian Festival has generated an impact of more than \$982,000 in economic activity in Knoxville. JAST has been an advisor and partner for seven years and participates in the Festival. ACCT joins the Nashville Cherry Blossom Festival to share Japanese arts and culture. At last year's Festival, the Center made mochitsuki (Japanese Rice Cake).

The 2020 Knox Asian Festival scheduled for August 30th was cancelled due to COVID-19, but ACCT will be offering four Asian cooking classes in August. The first cooking class – How to Make Japanese Pizza – will be on August 5th. For more information about the Asian cooking classes visit [www.knoxasianfestival.com](http://www.knoxasianfestival.com). You may also contact Kumi Alderman at [info@knoxasianfestival.com](mailto:info@knoxasianfestival.com).





Guide to Daily Living in Tennessee



JAST's Guide to Daily Living in Tennessee is now available! It's for newcomers and long-time residents originally from Japan to familiarize them with essential information on aspects of daily life that may differ from life in Japan and other parts of the world where they may have lived before relocating to Tennessee. Please let your Japanese friends know about this guide. We hope this will be helpful to our Japanese community!

<https://www.jpntnguide.org/>

Virtual Sake Brewery Tour & Tasting

VIRTUAL  
SAKE BREWERY  
TOUR & TASTING  
WITH PROPER SAKE  
Saturday, August 1, 2020  
7:30 pm EDT • 6:30 pm CDT

PROPER SAKEの  
バーチャル酒蔵見と  
テースティング  
8月1日(土)

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REGISTRATION LINK  
[www.jasgeorgia.org/event-3909530](http://www.jasgeorgia.org/event-3909530)

Upcoming NAJAS Events

<a href="#">Hanaiku Workshop: Celebrating the Beauty of Flowers</a>	July 31, 2020 Japan-America Society of Dallas Fort Worth
<a href="#">Pecha-Kucha Storytelling Evening</a>	July 31, 2020 Japan-America Society of Greater Austin
<a href="#">Who Lead: Resilience Through Crisis</a>	August 5, 2020 Japan-America Society of Hawaii
<a href="#">A Conversation in Japanese with Toko Shiiki: Japanese Filmmaker, Photographer, and Musician</a>	August 31, 2020 Japan-America Society of Cincinnati

## Partner Resources COVID-19

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