

September 05, 2013

News Release

*For Immediate Release*

### **Annual Japanese Fall Festival Friday through Sunday**

The Springfield Sister Cities Association, with support from the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, hosts the 18th Annual Japanese Fall Festival Friday, Sept. 6, through Sunday, Sept. 8, in the Mizumoto Japanese Stroll Garden in Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park, 2400 S. Scenic Ave., Springfield.

The festival kicks off Friday evening with opening ceremonies at 6:15 p.m. Hundreds of Springfield area elementary school students act as ambassadors and perform a festival dance at the main stage. The festival continues Saturday and Sunday.

This year's festival includes performances by the Samurai Sword Soul, professional Japanese storyteller Kuniko Yamamoto, the St. Louis Osuwa Taiko drummers, the Springfield Regional Opera performing selections from Gilbert & Sullivan's "The Mikado," and traditional Japanese top spinner Hiroshi Tada. Friday and Saturday evenings are highlighted by a beautiful candlelight walk throughout the park.

Festival performers will visit several Springfield elementary schools Friday, Sept. 6, including:

- **Samurai Sword Soul:**  
Friday — 9 a.m. at Field Elementary, 10:30 a.m. at Rountree Elementary
- **Kuniko the Storyteller:**  
Friday — 10:30 a.m. at Watkins Elementary, 1 p.m. at Truman Elementary

The festival also includes daily tea ceremonies in the lakeside teahouse, a kimono fashion show, festival dancing, martial arts demonstrations, local performers, authentic Japanese food and regional artisans. Kids will enjoy hands-on activities with the Kickapoo High School Japanese Club, including chopsticks instruction, face painting and origami. Local band Plaid Dragon, which will travel to Springfield Sister City Isesaki, Japan in 2014, performs Sunday at 4:30 p.m.

A tent-top market offers Japanese souvenirs and apparel, with all proceeds benefiting Springfield Sister Cities Association and the Mizumoto Japanese Stroll Garden.

The three-day festival runs from 5:30 – 10 p.m. Friday night; 11 a.m. – 10 p.m. Saturday; and 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$7/adult; \$3/ kids 3-12; toddlers age 2 and younger are free. Weekend passes may be purchased at the gate for \$10/adult; \$5/kids.

For more information, visit [www.peacethroughpeople.org](http://www.peacethroughpeople.org) or call Cindy Jobe, Festival Coordinator, at 417-864-1341. For media inquiries only, call Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public

Information Administrator for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, at 417-874-2176 or 417-224-5510.