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News Release

For Immediate Release

18th Annual Japanese Fall Festival Sept. 6-8

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 at Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park, 2400 S. Scenic Ave., Springfield.

This year’s festival includes a samurai performance group, a professional Japanese storyteller, the Osuwa Taiko Drummers, Japanese top spinning, martial arts, a kimono fashion show and a wide array of other activities and local performances, including the Springfield Regional Opera.

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.

Highlights of the festival include:

- Friday night opening ceremonies with hundreds of local Kindergarten-through-fifth grade students, who were invited as ambassadors to represent their classes from every Springfield public elementary schools.
- Samurai performances on stage and a samurai boot camp for kids.
- Japanese Storyteller Kuniko Yamamoto- more at www.kunikotheater.com
- Osuwa Taiko Drummers, from St. Louis- more at www.stltaiko.org
- Traditional Japanese top spinner Hiroshi Tada
- Local martial arts groups
- Local band Plaid Dragon, which will travel to Springfield sister city Isesaki, Japan in 2014
- Hands-on kids' activities from the Kickapoo High School Japanese Club, including chop sticks instruction, face painting, origami, Japanese-style yo-yos

The festival also hosts daily tea ceremonies in the lakeside tea house, nightly candlelight strolls through the garden, local performers, authentic Japanese food and regional artisans and merchants. A large tent-top market offers Japanese souvenirs and apparel, with all proceeds benefiting Springfield Sister Cities Association and the Mizumoto Japanese Stroll Garden.

Deadline for applications from vendors and artisans is August 10. Applications are available online at www.parkboard.org or www.peacethroughpeople.org.

For more information, visit www.peacethroughpeople.org. For 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.