

August 02, 2013

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](http://www.kunikotheater.com)
- Osuwa Taiko Drummers, from St. Louis- more at [www.stltaiko.org](http://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](http://www.parkboard.org) or [www.peacethroughpeople.org](http://www.peacethroughpeople.org).

For more information, visit [www.peacethroughpeople.org](http://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.