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**News Release**

*For Immediate Release*

**Japanese Fall Festival Highlights Include Sumo Wrestlers**



The Springfield Sister Cities Association, with support from the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, will host its 16th Japanese Fall Festival Friday, Sept. 9 through Sunday, Sept. 11 in the Mizumoto Japanese Stroll Garden at Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park, 2400 S. Scenic Ave., with special performances by a world champion sumo wrestler, an authentic candy artist, taiko drummers and a wide array of other activities and performances.

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 \$5 for adults; \$3 for kids 12 and younger; and toddlers two years of age and under are free.

This year's highlights include:

- Opening ceremonies on Friday night with a children's gathering comprised of hundreds of local Kindergarten-through-sixth grade elementary students, who were invited as ambassadors to represent their classes from every Springfield public elementary school;
- Professional sumo wrestlers, one of which is a world champion ([www.sumobyamba.com](http://www.sumobyamba.com));
- Traditional Japanese candy artist ([www.candymiyuki.com](http://www.candymiyuki.com));
- Taiko drumming group Osuwa Taiko, from St. Louis ([www.stltaiko.com](http://www.stltaiko.com));
- Traditional Japanese top spinner Hiroshi Tada, from St. Louis;
- Local martial artists groups, including those with sword demonstrations; and
- Local musical group who will travel to Japan in 2011

The festival also hosts daily tea ceremonies in the lakeside tea house, nightly candlelight strolls through the garden, hands-on activities for children, presentations by local performers, authentic Japanese food and regional artisans and merchants. A large tent top market features Japanese souvenirs and apparel for sale, with all proceeds benefiting SSCA and the Japanese Garden.

For a copy of this year's performance schedule, available online Sept. 1, visit [www.PeaceThroughPeople.org](http://www.PeaceThroughPeople.org).

For more information, media contact: Cindy Jobe, Festival Coordinator, 417-891-1191.