

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT For Immediate Release

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JCCCNC Celebrates Children at 19th Annual Children's Day Festival in Japantown

SAN FRANCISCO (June 9, 2011) – On Saturday, May 7, 2011, over 1,200 people crowded Japantown Peace Plaza in San Francisco to celebrate Kristi Yamaguchi's Children's Day Festival in Japantown.

The event, sponsored by the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCCNC), with support from The Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation and the Hatsuro and Amey Aizawa Family Charitable Trust, celebrated children in recognition of the national holiday, Kodomo no Hi (Children's Day), in Japan.



Children at Koi Nobori Station

The festival featured traditional Japanese crafts like *origami* (paper folding), *koinobori* (wind carp) and *hachimaki* (headband) making, fishing and balloon games, and food booths hosted by local community organizations, as well as dance and music performances including *odori* (traditional Japanese dance), hula, ukulele, *taiko* (drumming), *shamisen* (string instrument), *kendo* (martial arts) and other performances by youth.



Kristi Yamaguchi signing her new book

Children and fans of all ages were also treated to a special appearance by Kristi Yamaguchi who took time to meet and greet festival attendees and sign copies of her new book "Dream Big, Little Pig."

The theme of this year's art contest was the hopes and wishes for recovery of the Japan earthquake and tsunami victims. The 2011 Northern California Cherry Blossom Court selected the winners of the contest. The contest was sponsored by Sakura of America who provided the materials and prizes.



Children's Day School Visits

The festival was the highlight of a one week Children's Day celebration in which the JCCCNC offered traditional kimono dressing for kids and hosted over 60 San Francisco public school classes, nearly 1400 students, K – 2nd grade for their Children's Day School Visit Program. Children recognized their favorite Disney characters in the *Hinamatsuri* (Girls Day) and *Tango no Sekku* (Boys Day) doll displays, crafted paper *koi* (carp) and *kabuto* (helmets), and learned a Japanese folk dance. By learning about the dolls and their history and through crafts, children were able to learn and celebrate Japanese culture in a way that is meaningful to them, their friends, and their families.

For more information or to participate in next year's Kristi Yamaguchi's Children's Day Festival in Japantown, please contact the JCCCNC at (415) 567-5505 or email programsevents@jcccnc.org.

Performance groups at the festival included: ABC Preschool, Clarendon Elementary School Taiko, Gen Taiko, Hideko Nakajima – Hauta and Shamisen, J-Town Hui, , Kirakiraboshi Choir, Madame Michiya Hanayagi Dance Group, Hālau Ka Liko Pua O Kalaniākea, UCB and the San Francisco Kendo Association.

Activity booths were hosted by the following groups:

2010 Cherry Blossom Court, Asobi Arts, Balloon Angels-Pine United Methodist Church, California Highway Patrol, Clarendon Elementary School JBBP, George Washington High School Japanese National Honor Society, Japanese Community Youth Council (JCYC), Kintetsu International, Nakayoshi, Nichi Bei Weekly, Nihonmachi Little Friends, Nobirukai, Rosa Parks Elementary School-JBBP, St. Ignatius Japanese Language Program and Xperience.

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About JCCCNC

Envisioned by the Japanese American community, JCCCNC will be an everlasting foundation of our Japanese American ancestry, cultural heritage, histories and traditions. The JCCCNC strives to meet the evolving needs of the Japanese American community through programs, affordable services and facility usage. The JCCCNC is a non-profit community center based in San Francisco.

Photo credits:

Children at Koi Nobori Station: Courtesy of John Nagano
Children's Day School Visits: Courtesy of William Lee
Kristi Yamaguchi signing her new book: Courtesy of JCCCNC